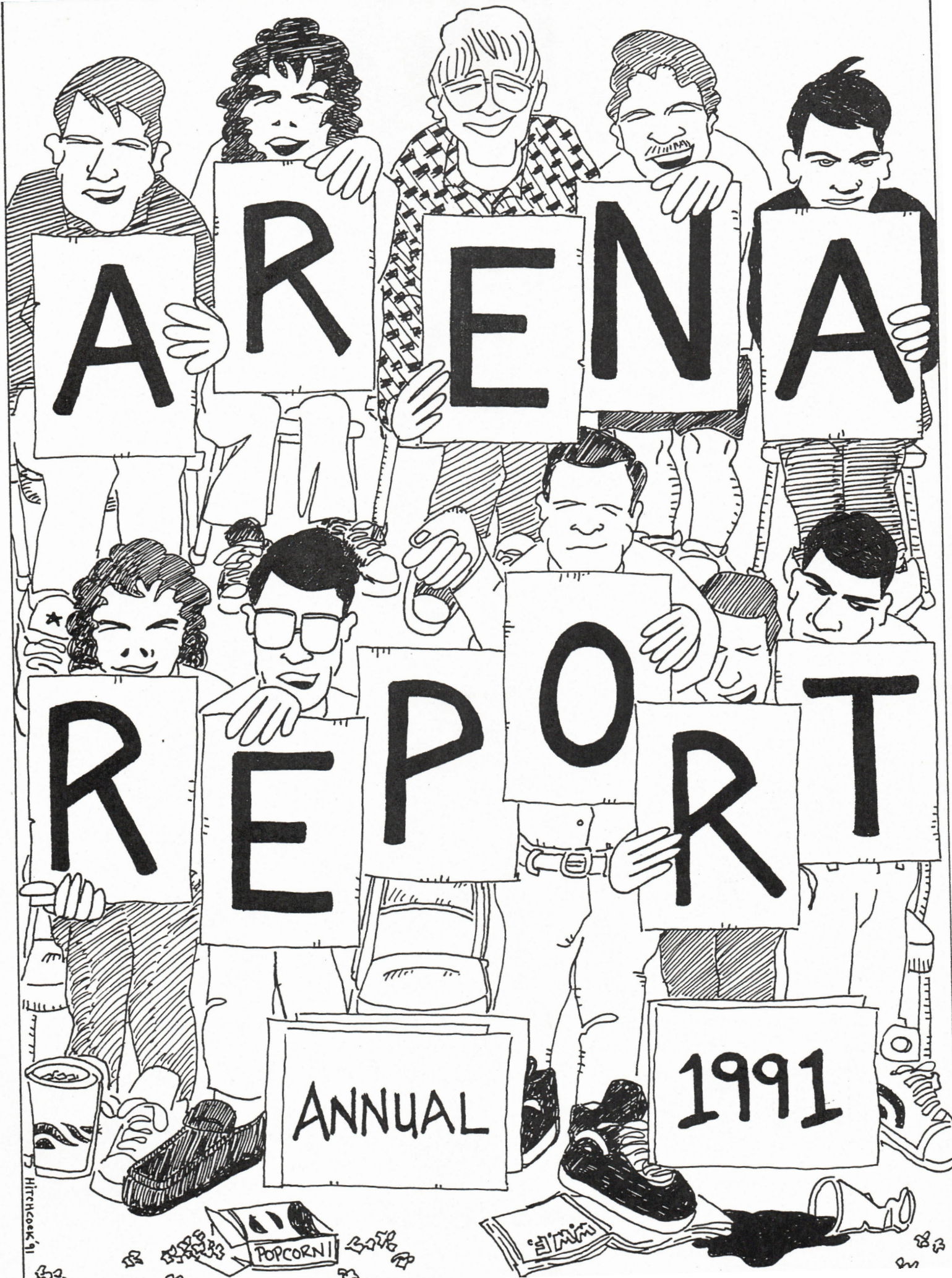




safe,
Thanks for
everything in '91.
Ron

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Arena Report 1991 Annual. Boy, this has been something. I have to say I'm proud of this effort, but not because of me. It's because of all the talented writers that contributed to this endeavor. We have such a variety of columns and articles that it was fun putting them in piece by piece. Instead of going over every column one by one and telling you what they are about (since that was a criticism in my "AR" poll, that I waste too much time on page 1), I'd like to take this time to thank some people that have made "AR" what it is today. First and foremost is my wife Cheryl. No sane wife should have to put up with as much wrestling as she does. Whether its time I spend on the phone, watching tapes, or working on this sheet, (not to mention going to at least one show per week) she is always understanding. Ok hon, at least tolerant. Thanks for being who you are. Love ya babe. Next I'd like to thank my staff. Evan, who I don't think realizes how much I appreciate his work and help. I never have to worry about Evan missing a deadline. He's usually a column ahead of me. Thanks bud....Marianne Ryan who through all the controversy earlier in the year still plugged away without missing a beat. You'll be a part of "AR" as long as you want kid..... Mike Terry, who I like to call my ace in the hole. Probably the most under-exposed writer in the business. This is one guy who I wouldn't mind having some other space to give his 2 cents.....Scott Hudson who hit it big getting the shot at color announcing for the fledgling GWF. Scott has the talent to make it big in this biz. Despite his Dallas trips coming on the weekend of his column being due, he never missed one. Continued success big man.... And the last man of the staff is a guy who opened his arms to me when I first moved to Florida. He didn't know me from a hole in the wall. He just saw my name in the "sheets". You wouldn't believe the packets this guy sent me in Connecticut letting me know where everything was in Florida to help me make our move easier. Of course I'm talking about staff member who doubles as a great friend, Klone. His writing may be cosmic at times, but he's got some of the best insight into the game. In other words, Klone knows his stuff.

I'd also like to thank my associate staff of Jeff Siegel, K.C. O'Connor, and Mike Lano who will all have a bigger part in "AR" for 1992. Thanks to John Hitchcock for his "toons" as he made the annual a tad bit less generic. I hope John becomes a bigger part of "AR" in '92 as well.

Thanks to Dave Meltzer and Steve Beverly for the oodles of info they helped me with. Also thanks to those who I can't mention by name for the same.

Thanks to Dean, Caryl, and Sue at Pac & Copy Plus for my three time a week visits. During the last two weeks with this annual it was more like every day. Yet, they didn't pull their hair out listening to my whacky requests.

Thanks of course to all my contributors in the annual. I was pleased with everything I received and I think my readers will be too.

And finally, thanks to all my readers for if it weren't for you, "AR" wouldn't be here today and it is a part of my life that I enjoy immensely. I hope I bring you as much enjoyment as you bring me.

For those that are getting this annual that aren't regular subscribers to Arena Report, it is published bi-weekly at the cost of \$1.00 per issue. All subs can be sent to Arena Report, P.O. Box 952547, Lake Mary, FL 32795. I will see all of you with the regular issue on 1/13.

I figured it wasn't fair for me to ask all of you to fill out a profile on yourself if I ~~didn't~~ do one so to open up this annual here is your faithful editor's reader profile:

NAME: RON LEMIEUX

BORN: 2/20/62 Pawtucket, RI

OCCUPATION: Sales (uniform company), publisher

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: Funny, easy-going

DREAM VACATION: Tokyo, Japan with a huge gathering of hardcores

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: Traffic, Disney World, N.Y. Yankees, LA Lakers
(I'm a big Red Sox & Celtic fan)

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: * Cheryl Lemieux
But if she wasn't available; Debbie Malenko

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: St. Elmos Fire

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: diet pepsi, leftovers
(usually not eaten), Gerber baby food

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE; I need help on this one. I don't have a clue.

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Beverly Hills 90210 (And I'm 29 years old?)
Life Goes On (Hey, my wife hooked me on it.)
(See Klone, I told the truth.)

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: It had to be the Baltimore Bash in 1990. The
best get together ever.

RON LEMIEUX'S 1991 WRESTLING AWARDS

My picks are based solely on the U.S. wrestling scene since not everyone has access to Japanese or Mexican tapes. Besides that, there wouldn't be many American winners. Comments and arguments are welcome.

Wrestler of the Year: BARRY WINDHAM The toughest category for me. This is one category that I could have gone to Japan 10 times for. Out of all the americans, Barry had the most consistant matches in the states whether it was with Arn Anderson in a tag or solo when he turned face. Runner-up- Ric Flair

Best Babyface: HULK HOGAN I know, I'm tired of him too but you can't argue his popularity. Second goes to Sting. Too bad it's a contradiction in real life.

Best Heel: THE UNDERTAKER The man who makes little kids cry and women shake in fear. Okay, maybe not that extreme but the guy plays the part super. And Percy doesn't hurt the gimmick with his portrayal. Eerie. Second goes to Jake Roberts who is such a super heel that I never knew why Vince turned him face to begin with.

Feud of the Year: Freebirds vs. Young Southern Pistol Boys I correct myself from the earlier statement. This was the toughest category. Nothing came to mind at all. At least these four always had at least *** matches the million times I saw them.

Tag Team of the Year: NASTY BOYS The two teams that should have won it, the Rockers and Steiners weren't together for a good part of the year which disqualifies them both. Nasties are basically a winner by default. 2nd goes to the IWF team of the Heartbreakers, Big Till and Mr. Terrific, Tim Parker. Consistant 3 star bouts.

Most Improved: DUSTIN RHODES The kid was always good but now he's on the verge of greatness. Second goes to Ron Simmons who turned it up a few notches for his big push.

Most Unimproved: BRET HART I caught hell for last years pick, Stan Lane and I'll probably hear it again this year for this one. But to me, a superstar like Bret should be able to carry slugs like Warlord and Barbarian to a decent bout. He hasn't done it since winning the I-C title. A year ago, he could have done it. Second goes to Davey Boy Smith. Went from the lower rung of the ladder to the bottom rung.

Best On Interviews: THE ENFORCERS Headed by Double A, this tandem could rip lines off one after another. Their "We are the only real wrestlers left" schtick was great. I'm happy for Larry Z. that he caught on here. Arn won this award solo last year. Second goes to Jake Roberts.

Most Charismatic: Hulk Hogan No comment. Next is Ultimate Warrior who always got huge pops at the shows I was at. Next to Sid's pop rocks fizzle, I can't figure why Vince let the Warrior go.

Most Overrated Wrestler: BIG VAN VADER I know the guy is a legend in Japan but what does he do in his matches? Punch, kick, clothesline, with a couple of highspots (?) thrown in. He's over on his gimmick and that's it. He's even got the hardcores fooled. Witness Klon when Vader comes out at a live show. Like a kid in a candy store. Second goes to Bully Busick. I haven't seen the guy in a decent match yet and I'm not just talking WWF. The guy stinks.

4

Most Underrated Wrestler: MARTY JANNETTY It's always Shawn Michaels this and Michaels that. But Jannetty showed his stuff in the Survivors. Everyone knows he's good but he's always in Shawn's shadow. Second goes to one of my personal fave's (you all have that one oddball pick don't you?) Jack Victory. If the guy could only find his identity. Good worker. Still think him and Tatum could make it big in WCW.

Best Promotion: WCW I don't know if there really was a best promotion but Flair hasn't lit a fire under WWF's butt yet and WCW has turned the corner. We think.

Best Brawler: CACTUS JACK Shouldn't have to even think about this one. As long as the guy doesn't kill himself or Terry Funk come back to the ring wars, he'll have no challenge. Second goes to the human roadmap, Abdullah.

Best Television Show: WCW SATURDAY NIGHT Give credit to Dusty. His TV has really been on a high lately picking up enough from the early part of the year to garner this award. Second goes to Prime Time Wrestling although I'm really bored with this panel set up.

Match of the Year: STEINERS VS. STING & LUGER From Super Brawl in St. Pete. Hot move after hot move and although both teams were faces, the place was going nuts. One of those bouts that after it was over you said, "Whew, that was fun." Second goes to Steamboat & Dustin vs. Enforcers at the Clash. Just a tremendous bout. I have to mention my number 3 here as it was Sting & Steiner vs. Abby & Cactus from Lakeland. Sheer brutality.

Rookie of the Year: VAN HAMMER Hey, Jim Ross said if he didn't win there shouldn't be a category. My real pick is (Close your eyes Jimbo.) Johnny B. Badd. Can't think of a second placer but even if Hammer was the only rookie....Hey, then there wouldn't be a category.

Manager of the Year: BOBBY HEENAN He finally gets his due but only because Jim Cornette wasn't active enough and Paul E. came back too late. But Dangerously was so strong at the end of this year that he takes second. Would have won handily if he worked the whole year at that pace.

Best Television Announcer: JIM ROSS Ho-hum. Same old stuff but I tried to find someone better. Tony Schiavonto comes in second.

Worst Television Announcer: ERIC BISHOFF I still think his halloween costume looked normal on him. Second goes to Gorilla Monsoon who almost took the top spot just for his horrendous work at Survivors.

OTHER AWARDS:

Best Technical Wrestler: BOBBY EATON

Worst Promotional Angle: JAKE ROBERTS-ULTIMATE WARRIOR SKITS How believable were they? Especially the one where Jake buried him. Too bad the business is so exposed, that would have done it alone.

Best Flying Wrestler: BRIAN PILLMAN

My Favorite and Most Hated Wrestler: SCOTT STEINER & HACKSAW DUGGAN RESPECTIVELY

FROM THE 'FAMILY' FILES OF JEFF MULLINS, EDITOR, PRO WRESTLING SUSHI

Dear Parents (or Guardians):

Once again your 9-year-old child, Jubie Jay Mullins, is being suspended from school due to his bizarre, anti-social behavior and his dangerous preoccupation with pro wrestling. Case in point: When informed that this was the seventh time he was being expelled, Jubie Jay's eyes grew wide and he cheered, "Wooooo! Didja know that Ric Flair held the NWA strap seven times?"

One of the reasons Jubie is being suspended, is because of the outlandish U.S. History "test" he concocted as his 4th grade social studies project. Below is only a part of the "test" which he passed out to fellow students. As you can see, Jubie is living proof that some people should be castrated at a very young age for the good of the country and for the good of entire future generations to come!



Listen up, pukes! You traitors who've abandoned WCW and Luscious Lex for the WWF and Ric Flair! You turncoats who've been watching Japan tapes instead of Global on ESPN! Also, you U.S. Marine Corps Sergeants with big jaws who once spurned your country and are now sucking up to get it back! Visiting U.S. national monuments ain't gonna cut it! Watching Gone With the Wind twenty times on TBS ain't gonna make you a born again American no matter how many times you view it! An' doing a hundred run-ins to save Jim Duggan's bacon ain't gonna do it either!

What you gotta do is take the JUBIE JAY MULLINS 'REAL' AMERICUN TEST! Pass it...an' you'll get your green card. Fail it...an' the Americun Dream will come over your house and put the Weaver Lock on you and your egg sucking dog! So, study up, pukes! An' when you think you are ready, take my test and find out if you are a pencil necked geek...or a REAL Americun!

JUBIE JAY MULLINS 'REAL' AMERICUN TEST!

1. The most important "rock" in Americun history:
 - A) Plymouth Rock
 - B) Rock & Roll Express
 - C) "Wrestle Rock"
 - D) The rock under which Mr. & Mrs. McMahon found Vince Jr.
2. The most powerful "finishing move" in the history of Americun warfare:
 - A) The atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in WWII
 - B) The leg dropped by Hulk Hogan during WMIII
 - C) The figure-four used by Ric Flair during BattleBrawl'90
 - D) The "Bombs Away" used by Ray Stevens in the 1960's
3. Americun history's most devastating "run-in":
 - A) Pearl Harbour
 - B) Plastic bag over Ric Flair's head
 - C) Abby and The Sheik use plastic spoons on each other while trying to be first in line at an all you can eat restaurant
 - D) When Ric Flair potatoed Piper & McMahon
4. Most important use of food in Americun history:
 - A) Indians feed starving Pilgrims
 - B) David Shults hits WWF-TV bride in face human s--- cream pie
 - C) Piper creams Snuka with coconut
 - D) Piper creams Snuka with pineapple
5. The nation's most "mysterious" disappearances:
 - A) Amelia Earhart
 - B) Jimmy "The Hit Man" Hoffa
 - C) James E. Cornette vanishes from WCW
 - D) Jim Hellwig's fade from the WWF
6. National "decisions" that still tend to infuriate most Americuns:
 - A) Busing
 - B) C.O.R.
 - C) D.Q.
 - D) Match called on account of "blood"
7. Famous "shots" heard 'round the world:
 - A) Booth shoots Lincoln at Ford's Theater
 - B) The first time you heard one of Ric Flair's famous chest slaps
 - C) Jake the Snake's pop on Elizabeth's ear during "Tuesday Night in Texas"
 - D) The moldy old "beaver" that Moolah continues to shoot whenever she wrestles and does her famous "bridge"
8. History's most important Americun women who have elevated the fairer sex to new heights:
 - A) Betsy Ross & Lucretia Mott
 - B) Madusa Miceli & Sherri Martel
 - C) Teresa de Marie & Marianne Ryan
 - D) The ring rat who crapped on Jerry Lawler
9. Greatest American "western" heroes:
 - A) Andrew "Old Hickory" Jackson
 - B) "Cowboy" Bill Watts
 - C) "Wild Bill" Irwin
 - D) The "Midnight Rider"
10. Americun Injuns who've done their people proud:
 - A) Tecumseh & Chief Sitting Bull
 - B) Bull Ramos
 - C) Wahoo McDaniels & Jay Strongbow
 - D) Sky Low Low
11. Sights of "bloodiest" Americun battles:
 - A) Antietam, VA

Jubie is also being suspended from school for hurling a metal folding chair onto the stage in the cafeteria during the school's music assembly. He said he tossed the chair at the guest classical artist because "the bum could not jerk his head up and down and swing his guitar around his neck" like someone named "Van Hammer!"

Jubie is a sick little boy! As you can see, he cannot differentiate reality from wrestling fantasy! He needs serious psycho-therapy! Shock treatment might not be a bad idea! (I understand from Jubie there is someone from Canada named "Mountie" who you might be able to hire cheap.) If he does not get help soon, he will grow up permanently warped!

Mz. Ida Fartsapon, Principal
Lucretia Mott Elementary School, San Jose, CA

"Live Report"

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING

Thursday, December 5, 1991

Melbourne Auditorium
Melbourne, FL

World TV Championship

Steve Austin pinned Firestarter Chip in 13:32 with the stun gun. I yelled out "What the hell is a firebreaker?!" Klone told me it was one of those guys that break the glass to notify the fire department there is a fire. Wise guy. Chip tried some flying moves but looked bad. Austin has that presence.

*

2nd Match

Oz beat John Peterson with a belly to back suplex in 4:34. They announced Oz at 352 lbs. Are they serious? One of the lines in this bout was "Hey Oz, tap your shoes, you want to go home." Peterson worked an IWF card in St. Cloud as J.B. Badd a few months ago and looked great since they let him do something. He's the guy that gave his opponent the piledriver from the second rope that was awesome. Dud

3rd Match

Big Van Vader & Oz went to a double count out with the Patriots in 12:29. This started out as a single bout between Vader and Champion. Oz came out and slammed Todd outside the ring at 7:00 and Chip followed and the ref decided to make it a tag bout. If Champion wasn't so juiced up he might not be so clumsy. He tripped going into the ropes and almost pulled a Tommy Young. I yelled, "Hey Todd, what special forces are you in?" Some guy in front of me replied, "The SPECIAL Olympics.". Vader was the only thing good about this bout but I still think the guy is over rated.

1/2*

4th Match

Arachniman defeated Terry Taylor in 18:09. This bout on paper looked great but it wasn't at all. Taylor is hilarious with his antics. When Tony Gilliam announced Terry as a member of York Foundation, Taylor corrected him and said he was no longer associated with them (but he is remaining a heel). The fans popped big time while Armstrong was booed. Well, Terry took care of that with, "Just because I don't associate with the York Foundation anymore doesn't mean I give a shit about any of you." Loud boos. Crowd was turned. At one point Taylor came up from a bodyslam by Brad and walked right into ref Nick Patrick who slammed Terry as well. Finish saw Taylor reverse a bodypress and thought he won the match and while he argued with Nick, Arachniman school boyed him. 3/4*

5th Match

Cactus Jack pinned Van Hammer in 12:14. Cactus got tons of cheers and fans going, "Bang, bang." I said, "Hey Hammer, aren't you the guy who wrote the song I Can't Drive 55?" The guy next to me said, "No, it's 'I Can't Wrestle in '91.' Classic. Hammer went for a leapfrog but Cactus butted him in the groin and pinned him. **1/4

Main Event

The Steiner Brothers beat The Enforcers in 14:10. Rick and Scott didn't do any of their hot moves. Lots of stalling and clowning. This girl had made a sign for the dogface gremlin that said, "Come home with me Rick." Klone said she wanted to do it doggy style. The guy next to me came up with another name for ring rat when he said, "She just wants to be a mat diver." Finish saw Arn ready with Scott in a piledriver but Rick gave him a steinerline and Scott pinned him. *

NOTES

Crowd was around 430 but they were pretty vocal.....Last year when they were here they did the "title change" with the Steiners beating the Midnight's for the U.S. Tag belts. What a difference a year makes.....The line up had been changed all over as Austin was billed vs. Pillman according to TV ads but Brian wasn't in the line up. P.N. News was scrapped as well. I know but hey, I rather had seen him vs. Vader than Champion.....Why don't Dennis Brent get a clue. In the new program he does for WCW he subliminally blasts the sheets. Doesn't this guy remember that he started publishing the newsletter "Pro Wrestling Digest"? Look for Klone to take this on in a future letter to the Observer.....

I did have other notes for this night, but for the safety of Klone & myself, I decided to wipe them out. Good move big guy or what?

1991 TOP TEN WRESTLERS IN THE WORLD
by Dave Meltzer

There is probably going to be a lot of controversy regarding picking the ten best workers in the world for 1991. First off, so many of the familiar names that grace this list were hampered by either their opponents or their surroundings. There were also a lot of top workers that were injured for a lot of the year (you know, like Sid Eudy). In addition, the guys who had the most great matches, which is usually what you try and base this on, in the case of this year, weren't always guys who were as much the best workers as the guys who had the most desire. For example, nobody will confuse that people like Ric Flair, Ted DiBiase or Curt Hennig aren't much better workers than Cactus Jack. At the same time, Cactus Jack was this year's classic overachiever, and was involved in a lot more memorable matches in 1991 than Flair, Hennig or DiBiase. But in going over the list, I tried to pick the guys who were consistently in the best matches, which works for and against some wrestlers because so much is dependent upon both the opponents and being put in a position by bookers to allow them to shine. I also didn't include women because, well, then no American wrestlers would make the list.

1. KENTA KOBASHI - Kobashi is the classic example of what I'm talking about above. He clearly is not the best worker in the world (although he's in the top class of workers), but of the top workers, there is nobody who puts out night-after-night like he does. It's almost a rarity when his matches don't approach four stars. His lone weakness is that he lacks experience, but it shows a lot less this year than last year. He's the kind of a wrestler who stops at nothing to put together a great match, and whatever he lacks in comparison to some of the other guys on this list when it comes to ring savvy is more than made up for in desire. Since he's just 24, if he can avoid a major injury (and the way he wrestles, that may not be easy), he should stay right near this spot for the next ten years and has the chance to be a more acrobatic, high-flying version of the Ric Flair of the 1990s.

2. HIROSHI HASE - Hase may be technically the best worker in the business right now. His ring psychology is equal to the best of them and his athletic ability is unsurpassed. As far as pure talent, he's even a notch above Shawn Michaels, tops Ric Flair as an athlete and his style is far more believable than that of Curt Hennig (whose exaggerations take away any look of authenticity even though his talent is extraordinary). Hase is in a funny position because he's the exact opposite of what we've seen from American bookers. Hase is Choshu's assistant booker, and pretty well puts together and runs the undercards for New Japan. Normally that would mean he'd get preferential treatment, but instead he leads to example. He actually puts far more people over than he should, but always shows that the company is more important in his book than the individual. If he was given the push his ringwork deserved, he should be IWGP champ, but instead he's generally competing in a tag team role. Hase is a more complete and better wrestler than Kobashi, and never dogs it in the ring, but just can't quite match Kobashi in desire.

3. KEIJI MUTO - Came into his own this year as a complete package after being one of the better workers around for years. With his knee problems that plagued him for much of last year apparently gone, he had great matches with the quality wrestlers and even worked good-to-great matches with a lot of stiffers in 1991. Not that Big Van Vader is any kind of a stiff, but when Japanese fans talk about his match with Vader as being one of the greatest in recent years in Tokyo, that's saying a lot.

4. TOSHIKI KAWADA - Kawada brings a sense of realism and his ability to work a "fake-shoot" is unsurpassed. He has the ability to appear to lose it and get "out of control" and destroy opponents with kick after kick and hard knee to the face after hard knee. The quality of his work and matches speaks for itself.

5. **JUMBO TSURUTA** – Unlike the previous four on the list, Tsuruta doesn't have a wide variety of impressive moves in his arsenal. He's just a basic wrestler with basic moves who, through ring psychology and controlling fans emotions is the closest thing to what Ric Flair was in the late 80s. Tsuruta's advantage this year is that he was in with great workers almost every night and is in a position (as the promotion's biggest star) that it's easy to be over in. But out of all the current so-called world champions, Tsuruta is the one who works the "perfect" title match in that he wins cleanly, but in doing so has the ability to build and make his challenger stronger.
6. **JUSHIN LIGER** – This guy's athletic talents are obvious to anyone who has ever seen him. His ability really hasn't decreased so much in the past year (when it seemed most had him ranked as No. 1) as much as others simply turned it up a notch. Clearly Liger's work is no better this year, and he hasn't been in the spotlight nearly as much. But he is still the king of the smaller wrestlers.
7. **MASA CHONO** – This pick is going to be the most controversial. Chono is kind of a Japanese version of Arn Anderson in that his style probably wouldn't translate well into another country. Unlike the names listed above (with the possible exception of Tsuruta), all would get over in the United States if given a chance because of their athletic ability and desire. Chono would probably only be borderline in the U.S., just like Arn Anderson, who is one of the best American style workers, if sent to Japan, would not impress people as a super worker. It's something about guys who initially lack charisma, but work those unspectacular but intense and realistic styles. But he had too many good matches with opponents with a wide variety of styles to rate him any lower than this. Chono's matches with Shinya Hashimoto in August were just unbelievable (their 30 minute draw was technically a superior match to the Hart vs. Hennig match at Summer Slam, and Hashimoto is only an average technical wrestler which says something for Chono's ability) and his match with Muto was a match of the year candidate that saw fans fill the ring with pillows they were so moved. For the ability to work super matches while staying on the mat, he's the best there is.
8. **SHAWN MICHAELS** – In my opinion, he's the best worker in the United States. Thus far, he's never been in the spotlight as a singles wrestler. I'd rate him below the Japanese names above simply because they do it every night, and Michaels isn't in the right place or with the right opponents to match their match quality. But his work is as solid as anyone's, he's more consistent and more spectacular than Arn Anderson, even more consistent than Bobby Eaton, not nearly as predictable as Ric Flair and not as unrealistic in style as Curt Hennig.
9. **YOSHIHIRO ASAI** – The best pure flying wrestler there is. Weakness is he's adapted to a Lucha Libre style, which overdoes the high spots. But nobody can match his high spots. Doesn't sell as well as a babyface of his type should be able to, but overcomes that somewhat because of his inherent likability and charisma. He's still the only wrestler in Japan who after his matches are over the fans are so impressed they throw money into the ring. I think working in 1992 with a mask as The Ultimate Dragon will hurt him.
10. **RIC FLAIR** – There are an awful lot of wrestlers that one could make a case belong on this list. Among those are: Tsuyoshi Kikuchi (who it may actually be criminal to leave off), Chris Benoit, Curt Hennig (who if he worked regularly the style he did in his match with Bret Hart at Summer Slam would be the easily the best wrestler in the United States), Ted DiBiase (based on his work over the last month although not for the entire year), Bobby Eaton, Arn Anderson, Cactus Jack (not for his athletic ability but his desire and quality of matches should put him on the list and he had some decent matches with some opponents who weren't that good, but I can't rate him higher than those mentioned above). Negro Casas. Terry Gordy, Mitsuharu Misawa (for consistent match quality he's right up there with Kobashi, Kawada, Kikuchi, Tsuruta, etc.) and Ricky Steamboat (who would be darn close to No. 1 based on his match at the Clash, but really didn't do much during his WWF stint which covered most of 1991). But for all the talk of predictability, every time I saw Flair he performed. He had good matches against guys who either had no ability or no desire. The time limitations weren't his doing. His matches in the WWF (with the exception of a few) haven't been Ric Flair calibre matches, but his individual performance in these matches has still been at the very top.

THE 14TH ANNUAL GAG AWARDS
by Jeff Zinger & J.Z. Travis

Hey! We're back again this year in the AR Annual with the 14th Annual GAG Awards, which originally appeared in our late, lamented (by us anyways) somewhat of a wrestling sheet called (you guessed it) GAG. Some of these "awards" are attempts at humor, while some are very serious-it's up to you to figure 'em out!

The Best International Objects Award- LADY BLOSSOM

The Worst Imitation of a CNN Broadcaster At A Clash Award- ERIC BISHOFF

The Shooter OF The Year Award- PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY

The Real Hot Love Babe From HellTM Award- MISSY HYATT

The Abdullah The Butcher Best Forehead Award- ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER

The Just One Of The Boys Award- RIC FLAIR

The Coolest Ring Entrance Music Award- CACTUS JACK

The Most Confusing Turn Award- JOHNNY B. BADD

The Best Ward Cleaver Imitation Award- RON LEMIEUX

The Waste Of Talent Award- LANCE RUSSELL

The Living Fossil Award- GORDON SOLIE

The Bump Artist Of The Year Award- CACTUS JACK

The MOST Annoying Dubbed In Crowd Noise Award- WCW

The Cy Sperling Fan Club Award- MICHAEL HAYES

The Best Wrestling Writer Award- VIC STANLEY

The Jerry Lawler's Fave Wrestler Award- B.T. EXPRESS

The Greatest Make-Up Award- PAUL BEARER

The Wrestling Fan Most Likely To Move To A Foreign Country Award- STEVE SIMS

The Best Vince McMahon Announcing Imitation Award- CRAIG JOHNSON

The All Time Stupidest Gimmick Award- OZ

The Favorite Wrestling Sheet Award- ARENA REPORT

The Kiss Ass Relating To The Previous Award Award- JEFF ZINGER & J.Z. TRAVIS

READER PROFILES

NAME: JEFF COHEN

OCCUPATION: Editor (Information Builders Inc., Manhattan)

BORN: 4/11/63 Bronx, NY

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: irreverent writing machine

DREAM VACATION: I try not to travel unless at gun point.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: Unnecessary happy endings on otherwise fine movies
"Other Peoples Money" most recently.

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Woody Allen

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Manhattan

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: Granny Smith apples,
lactaid milk, leftovers

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: James Spader, after losing 20 pounds

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Seinfeld

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Jim Cornette creaming Shane with the tennis racquet
at the Clash in '89. I was just getting into the wrestling underground
and this was an unexpected turn for all involved. I popped big time.

NAME: ANDY STOWELL

OCCUPATION: professional writer, independent filmmaker, computer salesman-Sears

BORN: 4/24/66 Pittsburgh, PA (Shadyside section)

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: Anyone that defines themselves in three words,
I don't want to know.

DREAM VACATION: A week in Tokyo with a group of hardcores seeing All Japan
and New Japan matches every night.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: over pshing of non-talent green wrestlers, matches
without high spots, racism, "gray" majority, censorship

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Jumbo Tsuruta at
the sushi and beer stand at the Tokyo Dome.

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Any Spike Lee, Martin Scorsese film, Godfather
Trilogy.

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: beer, chipped ham,
Ben & Jerry's Ice cream

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Michael Keaton

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: "Superstars of Wrestling", "In Living Color",
"Dinosaurs", "Inside the NFL", "MTV Day/Week In Rock"

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: The match where Nikita Koloff went face and helped
Dusty Rhodes beat Ole Anderson and JJ Dillon in a cage. So I use to be a
mark, but it kept me up for a week.

NAME: J.J. Kavon

OCCUPATION: Retired

BORN: 1/11/15 New York, NY

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: sick, sick, sick

DREAM VACATION: 2 weeks vacation with wife in Paradise Island winning a million
at casino.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: Taxes

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Jessica Fletcher

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Blue Thunder

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: concord grape wine,
blue cheese, blueberries

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: self

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Murder She Wrote

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: In the longest match on record: The original Angel
(from the Blue Heaven) beat Ed Jacob with a submission hold. Incidentally,
Vic Stanley omitted this Angel in his recent treatise in "WTN".

Excerpt From A Conversation That May (or may not) Have Taken Place
With Apologies to Random Marc.

by Jeff Bowdren

Dateline: April 1992. The wrestling world is still in shock over the sudden appearance of Ric Flair on the Saturday TBS show. Flair, who's last appearance on WCW had been in June of 1991, proudly boasted that the "master plan" had come to fruition. Titan Sports president Vince McMahon was probably as surprised as anyone to see Flair announce on his competition's show that he had quit Titan and was rejoining WCW, all this the day before Wrestlemania. McMahon, in a state of panic, ordered another self portrait painted and contacted "replacement Nature Boy" Buddy Landell, who promptly no-showed Wrestlemania. ("Brother, I swear to God! The doctor told me that it was the worst pink-eye he'd ever seen! Did you want me to infect the boys!?) All in all though, the 60,000 fans didn't seem to mind, especially after Vince appeared in the ring and announced he had fired Gene Okerlund for failing his "comprehensive steroid testing". Nothing like a little surprise for the fans to take their minds off of Flair's absence!

However, this reporter, in a rare Alex Marvez like burst of investigative journalism, has acquired a "secret tape" of a conversation that took place in Charlotte, NC in the offices of Jim Crockett Promotions during December of 1988. Observer correspondent Arnold Finster reportedly discovered the tape "under a pile of chicken wings" in David Crockett's office & immediately mailed them (postage due) to this correspondent. We now present an excerpt from this conversation, which should prove very enlightening and may also explain a lot of things that have happened over the last three years. The conversation apparently took place in Jim Crockett's office and present were Jim, booker Dusty Rhodes, and Ric Flair.....

JC- Well, I just finalized things with Atlanta. JCP as we know it ~~is~~ all but sold. DR- I steal can't belith it. Maybe ith we did the Midnight Rither angle again. RF- Oh get real. Maybe if you hadn't put the strap on that charismatic Barney Rubble lokk a like last year we wouldn't be in this position. DR- Hey! He wath my pilot! Did you expeth me to pay for air fare? JC- Look, let me say something. I mean. I know I've lost the company and all.. RF & DR- SHUT UP! JC- Sorry. RF- Look, if you two will give me a minute, I think I've got an idea. Jimmy, I want you to add a clause to the sale of the company. A buy back clause, if you will. DR- In pu'lic. RF- Exactly. This clause reflects that if, after say 42 months, TBS has the company operating at a loss, you have the opportunity to purchase the comapny back. JC- What are you getting at? RF- When TBS takes over, they'll undoubtedly appoint someone to oversee the day-to-day operations. I really don't see Ted Turner appointing an executive with any upwardly mobile potential to run a wrestling company, so chances are this guy will be an idiot. We'll probably be able to kay fabe this guy for years. DR- Willth I still get ta be da booka? RF- Bad News Virg. You have to get yourself fired. We need the worst booker we can possibly find. I know you're close, but every once in a while you might actually get a good idea. DR- Likth my feud with Tully? RF- Yeah....right. No, we need a tue boob. Someone who's sure to be a disaster. JC- How about Ole? RF- Nah, I'm not sure even TBS could be that stupid. Someone who isn't even in the business anymore, that everyone may have forgot about. DR- Jim Barnett? RF- Not bad, but we want to have the boys stay with the company. If Barnett gets the job, all the boys will quit. DR- Exthept Tommy Rich. Heh, heh. JC- Ha! Good one Dream. Oh, your not just a card, your the whole deck. RF- Wait a minute! I got it! George Scott! Remember Jim how George took all the credit when Mulligan and I were bookingall the angles back in Mid-Atlantic? JC- But he's not in wrestling anymore. RF- Exactly. Knowing George, he'll want to break up the Horsemen, fire the Midnight Express, & book house shows with me working against the Junkyard Dog and the Iron Sheik! DR- What about me? Do I geth to become the Midnith Rither again? RF- No, no a thousand times no! DR- Uvalde Slim? That workth great here in da Omni. RF- No. DR- How 'bout thith one? "Jack Daniels" I wear a hood and I bill mythelf from "Lynchburg, Tennessee". RF- No, would you give it a rest! What your going to do is get yourself fired. DR- Fired? Da Dream? Who coulth

believe it. The people love me. Why, when I was a boy in Austin, my daddy dug ditches.... RF- Save it! What happens is whatever TBS tells you to do, you do differently. They'll fire you and then...well...this is the tough part. You have to work for Vince. DR- Vinth? Baby, you've lost it! RF- Hey, this is where you plant the seed. Publically, we have a blowout. We hate one another. Your fired. In disgust, you call Vince. You got to sell yourself. Your good at that. You've been doing it for the last 20 years, making America think you're an athlete. DR- But Vinth hates me. RF- I know, and he'll probably make you do all kind of degrading things, but this way, we've got someone in Vince's organization. JC- Hey, it'd be great if we could get someone else inside. You know, in the office. RF- Like a mole. Someone deep, deep undercover, someone with the ability to suck up to anyone. Like a human ferret. JC, RF, & DR- (In unison) J.J.!!!!

At this point, there is some sort of gap in the tape of an unknown time. During the period though, the trio is joined by J.J. Dillon. The tape continues. Unknown voice- Dream! You've got doughnut glaze everywhere. RF- For God's sake, clean yourself up you fat pig. What are you a booker or a clown. JJ- Here, let me wipe your hands off Dust. RF- Your ass kissing again JJ. God that is so annoying. Yet, maybe we can take advantage of that. J.J., how would you like to provide a service to Jimmy, Dusty, myself, and especially the NWA. J.J.- Ohhhh! Why Ric, just the opportunity to help you, undoubtedly the greatest performer in the history of... RF- Would you knock off the boot licking! JJ, what we want from you is to quit WCW, and get yourself a job with Titan. I'm sure Vince could use another stooge. DR- You missed a spot JJ, could you get me another cup of coffee? No sugar, I'm dieting. RF- What do you think J.J.? We need you to be our ears in Vince's office. Any plans or angles, we need to know about. Dusty will be in the dressing room and you'll be in the office. JC- Hey! Maybe you could tell Vince that you'll be his liason with that Metzger guy in California. DR- No, no. It's Beltzer. Dan Beltzer. I hate that guy. Heth alwath ranking on me. RF- Wrong. It's Meltzer. Dave Meltzer. That's not a bad idea. Tell Vince that you can feed Meltzer misinformation or something. J.J.- If it helps you guys, I'm only too happy to help. And let me just say, that never have I been so proud... RF- Save it! We'll talk more about this later. Leave us alone for a while.

A door slams as J.J. apparently leaves. JC- Do you think he can pull it off? RF- Are you kidding? He's spent his whole life preparing for this. Now then, we get TBS to hire George Scott. The only problem is that George may prove so inept that even TBS will want to fire him. DR- The Midnight Booka!! JC- No, wait. I've got it. We can recommend a "booking committee". DR- But thoth thing neber work. RF- Exactly! It's always total confusion. Oh, that could drag things out indefinatly. JC- But what if things get too bad? RF- Aw, hell! I'll be the booker then. I'll pick things up for a while and then quit. I'll tell them I'm "stressed out". DR- Whath are we looking for' eventhually? RF- Simple. I'm going to make WCW fire me. JC- They'd never do that. TBS knows that you're the most valuable thing this company has. RF- Well, at that point I'll have to do something to prove myself not so valuable. I know that won't be easy. But after I get fired, Vince will be pounding on my door. You know that he wants Hogan & I to headline a Wrestlemania We promote the hell out of it and then, we spring the trap. I show up on the Saturday show the night before Wrestlemania announcing that I've quit Titan and that I'm back with JCP. Jimmy, you buy the promotion back for next to nothing from TBS, I come back as the hottest guy in the country, we can't help but make money. DR- And I can comth backth as the Midnighth Rither. RF- Would you shut up!

At this point, the tape ends. Could this be what really happened? Well, like I said, it would explain quite a bit.

IT'S MY 2-CENTS

by Mike Terry

Well Ho! Ho! Ho! (Or is it Yo! Yo! Yo! [baby]?) Happy holidays! This edition of the column is a potpourri of reflections from my columns over the past year and some thoughts on the present scene.

Some of my rather pointed (or should it be pointless?) observations during the year included: The USWA has more screw job finishes than Allen Funt has liver spots.....Who does Mike McGuirk's hair? Buck Zumhofe?.....After Bobby Heenan's drug arrest, I suggested the WWF make Bobby the new mascot, dress him like a fried egg and say: "This is your brain on drugs." Rim shot, Anton.....If the WWF ever teamed Sean Mooney and Howard Finkel, they'd be known as "The Fink & the Dink."If Davey Boy Smith gets any more pumped up, the WWF can float him in the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade.....whenever things get really bad, just be glad Lance Von Erich's gone.....the Ultimate Warrior and the WWF withstood the accusations that Hellwig was once the Ultimate Gigolo. No truth to the rumor that the Warrior would star in commercials for a new video game: Gay Boy by Nintendo.

Entertainment Weekly magazine on the Summer Slam videotape: "Want camp and big shoulders? Try a Joan Crawford movie."

Separated at birth: Mean Gene Okerlund and Cosmo Spaceley from "The Jetsons."Lord Alfred Hayes & Barbara Bush.....the Angel of Death and Frank Zappa.....Ivan Putski and Chip the Firebreaker.

We've certainly heard some classic quotes over the past year. There was Marc Lowrance: "Hello to those of you watching us in foreign countries--foreign to the United States, that is."Jerry Lawler on Lowrance: "Someone once asked me 'How long can someone live without a brain?' How old are you, Marc?"Bobby Heenan on Mean Gene carrying one of Hillbilly Jim's pigs: "I see Okerlund's been on 'Love Connection' again.....from David Letterman: "John Tesh doing Wimbledon (commentary) for NBC is like Vince McMahon doing World Series play-by-play.....Scott Hudson on the Lightning Kid's stall tactics: "This kid's got more stalls than the Global Dome restrooms."Roddy Piper: "I got 6 kids." Heenan: "Yeah, one of each."Randy Savage as Earthquake flexed his "muscles": "WBF: the future." Vince: "I don't think so."

Nicknames: Sean Michaels on Heenan: "Bobby the Brain Tumor."

No one has yet surpassed Boni Blackstone in the category of Best Bar Hair.

Maalox Moments of the Year: any appearance by the Boston Bad Boy on IWCCW.....Jim Ross' obnoxious overkill hyping his 900-number.....the skit in which Sean Mooney was k.o.'ed by a sandbag and "came to" as Johnny Carson.....Ox Baker's solo commentary on IWCCW in which he conversed with his imaginary friend "Ox, Jr."

My award for performer of the year in out-of-ring "skits:" indisputably--Jake the Snake Roberts. From the series with the Ultimate Warrior right up to present--no one has come close to him.

And in more current news: I had a lot of trouble believing Eddie Gilbert's statements on the Paul E. Dangerously situation. Doesn't anybody else remember all the discrepancies in his comments on departing WCW earlier this year? In fact, I think Eddie suffers from the rare disease called Skylowlowsis. Whenever he tells a lie, he shrinks.....I'll miss Scott Hudson on color commentary in the GWF. Scott, you certainly can be proud of your efforts.....Then there's GWF Commissioner Marcos Villa: make up your own joke.....Am I the only one who thinks Jim Ross' nasty remarks about Paul E. are a shoot?.....For Christmas, maybe we can find someone who can provide Black Bart with the ability to utter one sentence without the word: "dagdum."One of the best matches I've seen in 91 was Pillman-Cactus on WCW 11/30. The word suicidal comes to mind. Bang Bang, indeed!

Finally, sincere best wishes to all the newsletter editors, columnists, and readers. We frequently disagree. We do our share of sniping. But it's damn sure never dull in the world of wrestling journalism. You'll never know how much you mean to me. A special thanks again to Ron Lemieux for allowing me the privilege of contributing a regular column. Have a terrific holiday. See you next month with another 2-cents.

INTERNATIONAL WRESTLING FEDERATION

Thursday, December 12, 1991

Citrus Showcase
Winter Haven, FL

Opening Match

Brett Colt beat Nuclear Assassin #1 at 7:58 with a bulldog from the top rope. Colt is one half of the Long Riders tag team. Assassin #2 (Mike DiBacco) was at ringside and they did numerous switches. After the pin, the Nukes doubleteamed until Kip Winchester made the save. *

2nd Match

Kip Winchester defeated The Stomper in 10:06. Stomper has improved a lot since I last saw him. Mansfield has been working hard with him. Kip is solid in all areas and could make it big as a single. Stomper lifted Kip for a slam and his feet hit the ref who went down. Stomper's manager Nasty Ronnie went to hit Kip with a chair but Winchester ducked and Ronnie nailed Stomper. Kip then went to the top rope to hit the bulldog on a dazed Stomper for the win. *3/4

Russian Chain Tag Team Match

Dynamite Express beat The Bad Boys in 8:31. Brett Blair was chained to Randy Rhodes and Billy Brooks to Randy Fuller. All four juiced within the 2:00 mark. Action all over the place. Brooks and Fuller stayed close to the ring while Rhodes and Blair battled all over ringside. 3 of the 4's chain came off the wrist band near the end. Finish saw Blair come from the top rope but fell into Rhodes held up heel and was pinned. ****

IWF TV Championship

Caribbean Kid Berto beat Cliff Anderson via DQ in 13:41. Berto has a huge Haitian following here in Winter Haven. Place was going nuts. Berto was having a hard time understanding the spots Cliff was calling. Line from Cliff when he had Berto down at one point, "What do you think about this fruit picking fool now?" Finish saw Cliff dump Berto over top rope for DQ. **

IWF Tag Team Championship

Thunder & Lightning beat The Heartbreakers via DQ in 14:37. Champagne Cain couldn't make it tonight, (he had to work, kind of humorous if you think about it) so Nasty Ronnie took his place. Cain better watch his job as Ronnie did a hell of one in this bout. DQ happened when Breakers threw powder into T & L's eyes. Long Riders made the save. ***

IWF World Heavyweight Championship-No DQ

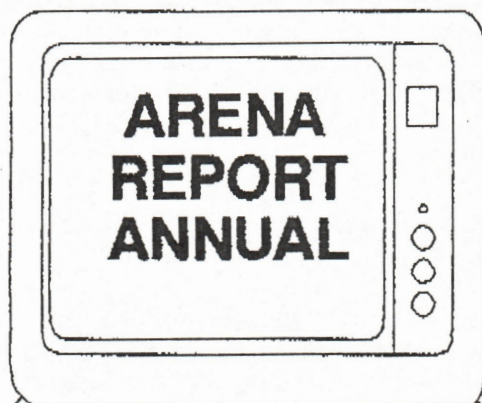
Al Hardiman beat Mondo Kleen via count out (you read that right) in 11:28. A count out decision in a no DQ bout. Looks like Eddy slipped into a Dusty finish with that one. Fans were irate. Eddy thinks that will make them come back for the Lumberjack bout on 1/10. Truthfully, Hardiman is probably the worst worker in the promotion but since Winter Haven is his hometown, the following is there. But this feud is being milked way too long. After the show, I was discussing this with Nasty Ronnie and he said, "You can't expect us to give Al the belt right away." I did a double take. I sure hope they aren't serious. Got to be kay fabbing me. Just to see if I put it in the sheet. Well, guess it worked. Mondo isn't as cut as he use to be. -*

NOTES

Crowd was around 175 which is one of their better ones. They just got TV in Winter Haven so it should pick up....Nasty Ronnie now does an insert in the program which is very good. He uses the monicker Steve Simms. If it wasn't for that double "m", I would have thought Mr. Mexico from Chi-town had invaded the Sunshine State....Chris Qualmann told me that Alex Marvez had asked him earlier in the day if Thunder & Lightning represented the IWF's anti-drug policy. If you saw these monsters, you'd know why he asked..... After the show, me and Chris went to a bar where our waitress told us she met Iron Sheik in a drug rehab in Atlanta back in 1988. Probably was a little after he and Duggan were caught in that car together.

The MATWATCHER Looks Back

TV'S 10 BEST BOUTS



While many of us who analyze this amazing industry often sound like TV critics who annually decry the fall season, one could find selected bouts during 1991 which stand well above the pack.

Hence, our second annual effort to look back at the ten top bouts airing on American television over the past twelve months.

The following choices are arguable but have offered singular moments of excellence in the period ending Dec. 15, 1991:

STEINERS VS. KENSUKE SASAKI & HIROSHI HASE *WCW/New Japan Supershow*



So many of the top bouts were of the tag variety but this one was a textbook for power moves and completed the crowning of Rick and Scott Steiner as the most internationally-dominant team of 1991, save Scott's summertime injury. Even the perennially respectful Tokyo crowds let out with the ooohs and aaahs which pepper the constant screams of American audiences when the Steiners face a top team. This was a match which left viewers hungry for a rematch which they are yet to see in the U.S.

RICKY STEAMBOAT & DUSTIN RHODES VS. ARN ANDERSON & LARRY ZBYSZKO *Clash of the Champions, Savannah GA*



One might subtitle this bout as "A Star Is Reborn," though Steamboat's most ardent followers knew he had little to prove. However, I have seen few competitors reach out and literally grab a crowd by the throat and shake them as did Steamboat during this November bout. His performance lifted Rhodes to a higher level, gave Anderson a rekindled spirit, energized Jim Ross at the mike and even made Zbyszko look solid. One of the true building blocks to regenerate television interest in the languishing WCW.

STEINERS VS. STING & LEX LUGER *Superbrawl*



One of the most incredible babyface-vs.-babyface matchups I've ever seen, which saw all four going at top speed. Steinerlines, the Scorpion, the torture rack—everything in the arsenal attempted. The only thing which kept this one from the runner-up slot was the discouraging run-in attempt of Nikita Koloff which cost viewers a clean finish. Still, a whirlwind performance by all four.

RANDY SAVAGE VS. THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR *Wrestlemania VII*



Usually one bout a year stands out for its booking over its technical excellence. This confrontation closely resembled the Warrior-Hulk Hogan battle of 1990 for crowd intensity and the macabre storyline of Jim Hellwig walking back

to the locker room for a sign and returning to defeat Savage in match with 16 two-counts was solid and then left the rest of the WM7 card in the wake with the post-match reunion of Randy with Liz. Certainly, the most memorable moment of 1991.

STEINERS VS. HIROSHI HASE & MASA CHONO *Clash of the Champions XV*



Again, another solid performance which saw Scott pin Chono with the Frankensteiner in the show-stealer of a lackluster *CLASH*, which continued a pattern of downward ratings for the TBS specials. Chono is just a shade below the tag technique of the then-injured Sasaki but with his skill, it matters little to U.S. audiences. Again, hampered by a post-match run-in to get over Dick Murdoch and Dick Slater as the Hardliners.

BRET HART VS. CURT HENNIG *Summer Slam '91*



This is the one which finally cemented Hart as a solid singles star in a company where he had been lodged as a tag performer. Hennig and Hart do not go with the speed of a Ric Flair but their work is stiff and, in particular, if Hennig was in the kind of back pain as has been indicated, he took some intense bumps. Plus, this was dressed up with the appearance of Hart's parents to congratulate him on his win.

STING VS. CACTUS JACK *World Wide Wrestling, Nov. 1990*



This was a brutal match to watch, largely because of the booking. Sting finally showed signs of being all the way back from his knee injury and it's hard to have a bad match with arguably the best worker in the business in 1991. Cactus took two incredible bumps out of the ring on his back and his loss in the "submit or surrender" contest did not "kill" him, as he was "out" from a self-inflicted bump and was declared the loser. A solid 20-minute affair and the best from a weekly series this year.

DOOM VS. ARN ANDERSON/BARRY WINDHAM *Starrcade '90*



This is probably the bloodiest of the nationally-televvised bloodbaths of the last year. Anderson/Windham brawled up and down the St. Louis runway with Butch Reed and Ron Simmons until it appeared none had any energy left. This kicked off a feud which eventually led to the split of Reed and Simmons.

BRIAN PILLMAN VS. CACTUS JACK *World Championship Wrestling*



I would like to see these two go at it 30-minutes plus and I believe they could and never miss a beat. They put as much into 9:23 as one can---from Air Pillmans to hipbusters to a fly from above the exit in the mezzanine level of Center Stage. If Cactus was higher on the TV cards and was allowed to have an extended match (a la the WORLD WIDE Sting bout), he would no doubt be a candidate for five of the top five in this category.

RIC FLAIR VS. TATSUMI FUJINAMI *WCW/New Japan Supershow*



This was the better of the two matchups between these venerable veterans. This one was marred by the perennial "Dusty finish" of a ref bump leading to a reversal of a title change for an over-the-top rope toss seen by "groggy" NWA official Bill Alfonso. But Flair and Fujinami were at their game far better than in St. Petersburg where both appeared tired, had to follow the electric Sting/Luger vs. Steinners match and ended abruptly with the cliché Flair feet-on-ropes finish, an ending Flair booked himself.

READER PROFILES

NAME: NICK GEORGES

OCCUPATION: warehouse manager

BORN: 3/4/50 Chicago, IL

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: hair, sports, pizza

DREAM VACATION: Clearwater, FL

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: most non-Americans

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Michael Jordan

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Taxi Driver

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: A & W Root Beer,
Yoplait frozen yogurt, OJ

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Robert Dinero

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Twin Peaks (when it was on)

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Attending a WWF card in Chicago a couple of years ago with among others, Steve Sims, Brad Muster, and Dave Meltzer.

NAME: PAUL NUCCI

OCCUPATION: student at Eastern Michigan University

BORN: 6/21/70 Grosse Point Park, MI

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: intelligent, honest, lazy

DREAM VACATION: Australia

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: bills, homework, landlords, messy roommates

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Sharon Stone

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Godfather

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: empty milk cartons,
lemonade, leftovers

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Bobby DeNero

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: The Simpsons

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Stan Lane talking to Bobby Eaton (TBS) while Missy Hyatt's top kept falling down. Stan, "It's gettin' hot in here Bobby". From then on, we call hot chicks "bobbys" - Funny, but it's true.

NAME: MIKE DUMAINE

OCCUPATION: headhunter

BORN: 7/31/47 Nashua, NH

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: witty, domesticated, sober (for now)

DREAM VACATION: Any place without my four kids preferably with a warm sandy beach.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: recessions, bosses, Madonna

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Jeff Smith (The Frugal Gourmet)

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: The Graduate

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: mold, beer, my 14 year old son

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Dustin Hoffman

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Cheers

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Hulk Hogan making the save on Bob Backlund against the Sheik when Backlund was champ. This was his turn from heel. Great heat from crowd.

WRESTLE-RADIO
by Dan Reilly

Our "Wrestle-Radio" talk show that I co-host with Tom Burke has been on the air for about six months now and continues to gather in new listeners every week. Unlike many wrestling radio hosts, we don't plug any 900 lines because we don't do one. We don't plug independent wrestling federations because we are not involved with any. And to my knowledge, Tom has never even mentioned his address in plugging his Global Wrestling Newsletter. Ours is a show for fans, giving them the weekly scoops, letting them air their gripes/opinions on what's going on in pro wrestling, and listening to Tom and myself interview a weekly guest.

Ours is a tightrope that we walk weekly. Some callers have blasted us for giving results before they air on TV. Others think it's great. Most of our listeners appear to be non-sheet readers and many of the weekly questions are of the Bill Apter type variety. Fan favorite/Babyface....rulebreaker/bad guy/heel....blood/juice, what's a radio host to do? We opt for the middle road but hopefully we are creating a product that both smarts/marks can equally enjoy. We talk steroids, we give out real names IF they ask. We talk about upcoming angles but we don't come across as smart-ass know it alls. People who read newsletters PAY to get their issues, radio is free and open to everyone and you must try for mass appeal. Discussions on Japan and Mexico are kept to a minimum. Most wrestling fans have no idea of anything except what's happening in the states. Portland and Memphis have rarely been mentioned. It's WWF country up here in the Northeast and Vince's ventures take front and center priority.

Many women/mothers called recently upset about the snake biting Macho Man's arm. Way too hardcore stuff for their children. Many negative comments about Jake Roberts whacking Liz in the chops. The Survivor Series got a 19-4 "thumbs down" in an informal survey we took over the air. So perhaps in our own small way wrestling fans are being educated as to what makes good wrestling. A little peek at what goes on behind the scenes. The vast majority of our listeners know it's all a work but we take it serious as they do because we are all still fans. Some radio shows place a large amount of comedy in their program. While Tom and I banter back and forth quite a bit, it's not a sideshow where we battle for "lines of the week".

Initially we had a problem with nothing but the 12 year olds calling the show. While they are fine, you can't attract much of an advertising base with only 6th and 7th graders. To get the adults we've had some old timers as guests. Buddy Rogers and Lou Thesz to name two, and hopefully that's jogged the minds of some of the younger fans to learn something about the sports history. Now we have a very different mix of sexes and age groups as our callers to hopefully give the audience a well rounded program.

Make no mistake, "When is the Ultimate Warrior coming back", "Where is Sid Justice?", "Will Brutus Beefcake ever wrestle again?" still dominate the questions which we answer and then send them along. But there is enough discussions of the issues, enough advice for the promoters on what the fans would do different, and enough intelligent chatter that we both look forward to the coming weeks show.

From a pure dollar/cents perspective, wrestling is kind of hard to market to prospective advertising clients. When a non-fan adult hears pro wrestling, the stereotype moron with the weeks growth of beard and missing the front teeth still rears its ugly head. We tell them to listen to the show, go to an arena show, and find out that pro wrestling crowds/fans are probably not much different from NFL or NHL crowds. So we've found that marketing the program to an early to mid 20's age group, mostly male, can get decent advertising results. It also helps to get a wrestling fan who owns a business to support the program.

The station we broadcast on supports our efforts 100%. They are amazed that any young people would ever turn to an AM radio station for anything. The sponsors are happy since they believe "niche" programming can get potentially excellent results for advertisers. "Wrestle Radio" also gives the station a shot in the arm on weekends when all they would be running anyway would be "satellite" fed programming. So in our first six months we've carved out an interesting mix of people coming together weekly to talk about something they all share a common love for-professional wrestling.

(Wrestle-Radio can be heard over WNNZ--640 AM--50,000 watts out of Springfield, Mass. Saturdays from 12 noon-1 p.m. Soon to expand to two hours weekly in early 1992)

My Most Memorable Wrestling Match
by

John H. Lanigan

When the esteemed editor of this erudite publication asked me to contribute to his Annual, I was a tad beside myself because I couldn't come up with a relevant topic. Klon suggested that I do another food report focusing on the likes of McDonald's, Denny's, etc, which we can all identify. It's a great idea, but I thought I should venture to several other establishments before Klon's idea could be served. Instead, I would like to tell the readers of Arena Report about Memorial Day 1985, watching Ric Flair defend against Magnum T.A. at Three Rivers Stadium in Pittsburgh.

The holiday started off with my attendance at a singles picnic at a Pittsburgh city park. I usually am pessimistic going to these events in "The Steel City" because the girls where I come from lack several attributes that guys find appealing, such as a slim figure, a willingness to have casual sex without having to ask for a hand in marriage and not asking any of those inquiring, probing questions about how much money you make and have tidied away for their benefit. After I grabbed a plateful of warm hotdogs and baked beans I sat down across from a rather attractive blonde. She turned out to be refreshing as we chatted about our recent vacations, just some nice pleasant banter for about 15 minutes. My skeptical romantic instincts took hold and I thought there had to be something wrong with this woman. Sure enough, she got up to grab a beer and I noticed her legs. Yeah, only an offensive tackle would be jealous of those tree stumps. Hey, I'm a leg man and really felt pity for this unfortunate lady, a victim of poor genetics.

My next stop was the Three Rivers Stadium parking lot where a carnival was in progress. It was fun because it featured many carny come-ons that one usually finds in rural county fairs and not in the big city. My favorite was seeing the "Deranged Young Man Who Used Drugs". I paid the fare to see a young fellow wallowing about on a stool with a chicken wire net separating him from the customers. He was actually wearing a straight-jacket and looked like he could pass for Mike Boyette's kid brother. He stared at a nine year-old and charged towards him letting out a menacing roar only to be swung back by the wire. The "druggie" just sat down and whimpered along the far wall but that kid was frightened all to hell.

It was time to jot over to the Stadium to watch the NWA under the stars at Three Rivers. The ring was set up between home plate and the pitcher's mound with the ringside seats covering the infield. A little black kid tugged at me and asked if I had an extra ticket so he could get close to the action. I didn't but told him I thought I could get him into the inner circle if he pretended to be with me. I put my arm around his shoulder and started asking him questions about geography, of all things, as the usher looked at my ticket and let us both pass without incident. The lad gave me a beaming grin and thanked me profusely and even lucked out getting an empty second row seat.

Nothing much noteworthy lead up to the main event except that I was surrounded by a group of drunken assholes at my first row seat. They weren't mean, but their diatribes to the wrestlers either made no sense or were very profane which I find very distasteful when kids are in attendance. Jimmy Valiant did have a decent brawl with Superstar Billy Graham in a bloody New York Street Fight. The first 25 minutes of Flair vs Magnum were the most boring twenty-five minutes I have witnessed. It was nothing more than Magnum putting the champ in a headlock with Flair trying to squirm out. Then we all got deluged with a severe thunderstorm. I was prepared and popped it my umbrella only to joined under it by two of those A-holes. They were so drunk, they started chanting "USA! USA!" I asked myself: "Why me, Lord?" Man, the rain was pouring down, lightning was flashing, the thunder was very loud, but the worst thing was one of those jerks had such terrible bad breath that even the swooshing rain couldn't make a dent to my relief. Much to their courage or stupidity, Magnum and Flair kept at it as Flair broke loose from the headlock. They did some stuff but nothing high-flying, no doubt, fearing a slip would ensue. At the 56 minute mark, Magnum threw Flair over the top ropes to get DQed. It's funny how the mind works. Those last twenty minutes huddled under an umbrella with two uninvited morons watching two pros give their best in a driving thunderstorm made such an indelible impression that I can still remember events leading up to my most memorable match. Happy New Year!

READER PROFILE

NAME: John H. Lanigan

OCCUPATION: Systems Analyst for the Criminal Division of the Court of Common Pleas located in Pittsburgh, PA serving Allegheny County.

BORN (DATE & CITY): September 3, 1947, Pittsburgh, PA

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: Punctual, Confrontational & Connoisseur.

DREAM VACATION: Return to Mexico City for my sixth visit and finally attend a bullfight.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: Business meetings, time limit draws that don't go to the full announced limit and the meaningless silly reports and musings of Marianne Ryan.

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Kareem Abdul Jabbar & Vincent K. McMahon, Jr.

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Pulney Swope

3 THINGS THAT YOU CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: A bottle of wine from the Lake Erie-Chautauqua region of New York State. These New York wines are superior to those from California. Secondly, Kraft Velveeta Cheese and finally, a negligee photo of Ferk. It's too hot-looking to store at room temperature.

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Kris Kristofferson

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: WWE Superstars of Wrestling

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Saturday, September 13, 1986 at the Richfield Coliseum near Cleveland, Ohio for a Saturday Night Main Event TV taping. It was here that I first saw Mr. Vincent K. McMahon in person! In fact, I almost touched this supreme being but was whisked away by a security guard.

A CHRISTMAS WISH LIST

KLV

JUSHIN LYGER - The incredible Keichi Yamada has to wonder whose ricecake he burned during the past year. 1991 saw him doing jobs for virtually anybody and his tv appearances nonexistent. His wish for 1992 is re-gain his momentum in his home country and to duplicate The Great Muta's success in the United States.

RIC FLAIR - The hardcore's favorite American wrestler has certainly had his most talked about year ever. He strapped his title belt back on, feigned fear of El Gigeeko, has disappointing bouts with Scott Steiner and Bobby Eaton, was fired, was eulogized, and was given the hardcores dream push by the infamous Vince McMahon. His wish for 1992 is to win the WWF title at the Royal Rumble and to have his long dreamed about Wrestlemania main event versus Hulk Hogan. Let us pray that he has the pride to get out before he becomes degraded into who knows what.

MR PERFECT - The injury to Curt Hennig transformed a talent considered in the top five of 1990 into a squashed ping pong ball and who knows if we will ever see him bounce the old way again. His current push as Flair's quasi-mgr and as a tv commentator will reveal whether or not he has the perfect heel personality or is merely a Paul Orndorff clone. His wish is to impress whoever that his mouth is as good as his bumps were.

KEIJI MUTO - Whether its as Keiji or his evil twin The Great Muta, the past year has not diminished the reputation of either. His wish is to stay in the good graces of Inoki (as his possible heir apparent) and perhaps enjoy a successful long American tour with WCW. He has the potential to become in the top three babyfaces in this country because he combines superior talent with true charisma.

SCOTT STEINER - The year 1991 was not kind to highly regarded younger Steiner. His much talked about singles match with Ric Flair impressed few and disappointed many. He did have a match of the year caliber bout with his brother versus Sting and Luger in St.Pete. Then came the injury which kept him out of action for almost half a year. His wish is to regain the world tag belts and become the US champion. If the head honchos at WCW have their future in sight, they will groom Scott as the lead babyface to head the promotion. Aside from being weak on interviews not another weakness could be found.

SHAWN MICHAELS - It seems 1991 was the year of the injury. Shawn Michaels suffered a serious one and came back none the worse for wear. His wish is become recognized in the caliber of Flair, DiBiase, Hennig and their ilk. Dave Meltzer recently stated that Steve Austin had the potential to become the next Ric Flair. According to last years Observer yearbook there is only two inches of height difference between the two. I personally that Shawn Michaels has an equal if not better chance to challenge the esteemed reputation of Ric Flair as Austin.

OWEN HART - At one time it seemed that Owen Hart was everything the hardcores could want in a wrestler. Now several years later and his Blue Blazer behind him Owen once again has his moment in the spotlight. His wish is razzle and dazzle anyone and everyone in his quest to prove himself.

BRIAN PILLMAN - The new year started with a bang for Flyin Brian, his tv match with Ric Flair was almost as good as it gets. It was almost all downhill from there and the light heavyweight belt did little to change the situation. Perhaps the best Christmas wish for the fearless flyer would be a membership in the Dangerous Alliance, a natural heel he seems to be.

WAS
THIS
JAN/FEB
90(?)

KENTA KOBASHI - My own personal favorite wrestler but I doubt that many so-called fans have the foggiest idea who he is. Not only is he one of the top workers in Japan but he could give Arn Anderson a run for his money in terms of conveying a variety of facial nuances. A wish for him would be to move to the upper echelon of the All Japan roster.

RICKY STEAMBOAT - What a long strange ride 1991 has been for Steamboat. You had to feel sorry for him wearing that ridiculous outfit, with a mouthful ready to spit out his dignity ever night. His return to WCW was wonderful for the reputation of Steamboat and WCW. His wish is show the world how much he was responsible for the quality of the Flair/Steamboat matches. My own personal desire is to see him eventually become the Black Dragon, a heel with incredible ability and evil incarnate.

TERRY TAYLOR - The Rodney Dangerfield of pro wrestling. What does he have to do in order to get any respect? A great technical wrestler and one on the best at working the crowd I have ever seen. A wish for Taylor would be for him to gain the tv title a a solo star, no mgr just his cocky, obnoxious self but I'm not going to hold my breath.

NASTY NED BRADY - An outstanding performer! His bumps could rival those of Cactus Jack, he exudes a wonderful heel persona and deserves a push in on of the major groups. The new year finds Nasty Ned coming into WCW to join his "cousin" Cactus Jack. I think that tag team of the year would definitely be within their reach.

JIM CORNETTE - He turned down a return to WCW and the offer to become the mgr of Ric Flair in the WWF. A wish of Cornette would be that he become the southern equivalent of Howard Stern with a daily radio show so outrageous that he becomes a national talent, that he surpasses Rush Limbaugh as the most listened to man in America.

(Klon continued)

EDDIE GILBERT - As I write this Eddie Gilbert has just begun booking the Global tv. I don't dare speculate on Global (it seems top talent will appear and then disappear quite rapidly (money ?). But it seems that virtually no one is watching the daily (whatever) ESPN shows. The wish for Eddie Gilbert would be that he could transform the ESPN shows into must see shows. My thoughts go back to Continental and what he did there (tv wise) with very little talent.

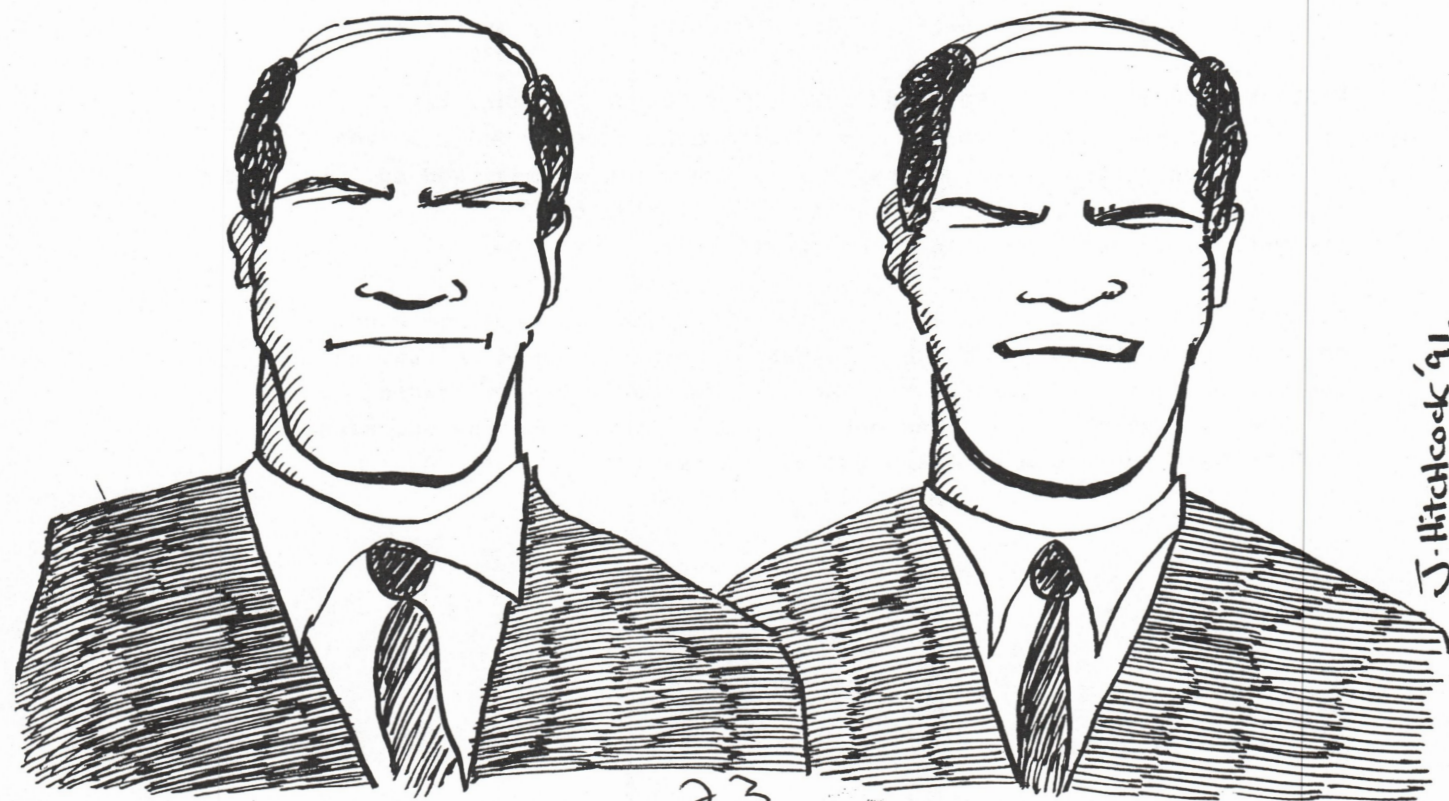
LIGHTNING KID - I think that many have wondered what a Jushin Lyger versus the Lightning Kid match would be like. That's a wish for this year.

MIKE SHAW (Norman, Makhan Singh) - 1991 saw many exposed to the brilliance on his interviews for the first time. A wish for this year would to get to hear this stupendous talent on a regular basis

NEGRO CASAS - We have seen WCW running excellant Chris Benoit versus Jushin Lyger matches. A wish is to see Negro Casas brought in challenge Flyin Brian.

ARENA REPORT READERS AND WRITERS - I hope that each and every one of you has a wonderful holiday season and the best possible new year

Bill Watts Lost Son, Scott Hudson.



SCOTT HUDSON'S.....

GEORGIA WRESTLING JOURNAL

PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR AS A YOUNG COLOR COMMENTATOR

November 11, 1990. A date that could, conceivably, live in infamy. It was on that night at the VFW Fairgrounds in Carrollton, Georgia, that Steve Prazak and I first approached Joe Pedicino about becoming a part of the Georgia All-Star Wrestling team. What prompted two otherwise unassuming sheet writers to take such a bold step? The performance of a still unknown ring announcer who made Boyd Pierce sound like Howard Finkel on the Deca. The guy was so horrid that Steve and I told Pedicino "We could do better than that!" (or words to that affect). Two weeks later, Pedicino called and said, "Alright. Put together a :90 weekly bit and call it 'A Fan's Perspective' and we'll see how it goes." "A Fan's Perspective" met with a good reaction all-around. On January 24, 1991, Pedicino asked me if I was interested in becoming the color commentator on "Pro-Wrestling 1991", the syndicated Georgia All-Star television show. After a .004 second decision making process, I agreed.

My first taping was at the Sparkles Rink in Lawrenceville, Georgia. What a night! For a guy who only 12 months prior had considered it a life highlight to share adjoining urinals with Ric Flair at the Georgia Mountains Center in Gainesville, this was nirvana! That same week also saw the debut of Steve Prazak as "Steven DeTruth" as my heel foil on an outgrowth of "A Fan's Perspective" called "Wrestling: Point/Counterpoint".

This scenario held form until June 1991. Almost as a ritual, every time we saw Joe Pedicino one of us would ask "How goes it with Global?". Many stops and starts later, Joe told us that the Global Wrestling Federation was officially a go as of June 28, 1991. If that news was not good enough, Pedicino followed up with the question "What times are you available on Fridays?" My response was basically that I was available after work any day of the week. I asked why and promptly had my system shocked. "Well," Pedicino began, "because I want you to do the color commentary on the syndicated and ESPN GWF television programs." Needless to say, I screamed "YES" in a fashion that would make Amber Lynn blush.

Keep in mind that up until this point, my association with the wrestling business was limited to the WVEU-TV and Georgia All-Star shows. But the prospect of of being on ESPN and a 130 station syndicated network was awe-inspiring. Hey, I'm just a sheet guy. Nothing more; but now I'm staring in the face of doing a big-time television show with a real announcing team (Craig Johnson, Joe Pedicino and Bonnie Blackstone, etc.). Whoa.

The June 28, 1991, GWF debut show in Dallas went smoothly and have since. I have had the opportunity to meet and become friends with the likes of Eddie Gilbert and Scott "Anthony" Levy. I have also had the opportunity to see the beginning of the careers of future stars like Mark Bagwell and Sean "The Lightning Kid" Waltham. And I got to meet Tessa! Jesus, can it get any better than this!?

Not being involved in the day-to-day operations of the GWF, I cannot guess as to the state of the business. The ratings are really good so I guess the business is the same. As an Atlanta resident the last 18 moths have seen a National Champion in college football and a Final Four basketball appearance (Georgia Tech), a National Champion in college baseball (University of Georgia), the WBC-WBA-IBF World Heavyweight Boxing champion (Evander Holyfield), an NFL playoff team (Atlanta Falcons), the awarding of the 1994 Super Bowl and 1996 Summer Olympics, and who can forget the 1991 National League baseball champions, the Atlanta Braves. This city is on a sports high and the Global Wrestling Federation is my own personal icing on the Atlanta sports cake. Here's hoping it never ends.

A LOOK AT SECTION D-- FROM THE SECOND ROW
by K.C. O'Connor

One of the more unusual and often annoying traditions of adulthood is the high school reunion. While the chance to see old friends is a highlight, few things are more annoying than seeing the people that were the geeks and losers in school that have now actually become something. When John Hitchcock started going to wrestling cards as a teenager he had little idea that one day his no holds barred attitude would spawn a group of a dozen fanatics that would rally by his side and join in a witty barrage of nearly every wrestler that he saw. Today "Front Row Section D", a group of die hard fans that just happened to be as educated as obnoxious, has gone from being the nerdy bastards in Greensboro to a group that wrestlers have demanded signs from and for some reason the envy of others.

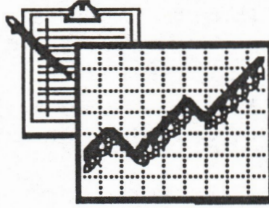
To start the secret of the Front Row, has always been knowing the difference between clever and asinine. No sign has ever revealed the wrestlers real names or any incriminating information. The challenge is coming up with the signs is to have something that the wrestlers will react to as well as get a pop from the fans that don't read the newsletters. A sign with a double meaning is always a challenge, but somehow between John and Bruce and the rest of the group the challenge is met. And though we have been accused of cheering the heels and booing the faces, in reality, since the Midnight Express originally turned face a few years back, we now cheer the best workers, and those that put out nothing face the wrath of the Front Row.

An example of a sign that had a double meaning was, "Flair Loves Bush". This was right after Flair's now infamous dinner with Jesse Helms, at the Presidents request. Flair not only popped, but Arn Anderson mentioned it during the next local interviews for Greensboro. Perhaps the most famous was from Wrestle War '90, drum roll please, "We Have Herd Enough!" This was the only sign that we have ever been asked not to hold up. This sign came at a time when a lot of long time fans were really feeling frustrated and could sense the impending doom that would soon erupt on our TV's and in our coliseum's. The signs and cheers and chants have been rewarding in that we have become well enough known to be recognized by the wrestlers that we have been fans of for so long. Men like Jim Cornette, who hasn't forgotten what it is like to be a fan as well as Arn Anderson, Sting, Lex Luger, and Cactus Jack, among others. Also through constant self promotion and a Dusty-like attitude at getting ourselves over, we have gotten to make acquaintances (and editors) around the country with people who share the same undying passion for this truly bizarre sport that we can't seem to do without. The Front Row has and always will be, in this for the fun and to try to make a card that much more enjoyable for ourselves as well as those that are within ear shot of the always boisterous smartasses on the Front Row.

In the tradition of Klon, I'd like to present my own brief Christmas wish list; To John, a great friend who never fails to see the humor in the toughest situations, and without whom I wouldn't be watching wrestling today, a moonsault from Liger X-mas night in Atlanta. To Bruce, the smartest dreamer I call friend, a half-time wedding at the NCAA championship basketball game between UNC and Duke, to Penelope Paradise. To Obin and Eddie, Airline tickets to Japan with an on flight porno movie, and Bud and the Budettes another year of happiness despite being family by blood and marriage. And mostly to Ron, a patient man if there ever was one, another succesful year with "AR" and a white X-mas in Florida.

25

STRICTLY BUSINESS



... Jeff Siegel

Woodward and Bernstein, Meltzer and Keller. An unusual pairing of journalistic duos? Well, maybe not as inappropriate as you might think.

You see, the advent and growth of wrestling's "sheets" actually poses the greatest similarities -- from a journalistic standpoint -- to one of the grandest traditions in American journalism: **investigative reporting.**

Investigative reporting has a long and illustrious history itself. The modern-day version grew out of a style of reporting first practiced at the beginning of this century known as "muckraking" -- its objective being to publicly expose apparent misconduct on the part of prominent individuals. Through the decades, this style of journalism truly exploded -- from coverage of labor racketeering during the early 1900s....through Edward R. Murrow's brilliant television exposes of McCarthyism in the fifties....to Watergate in the seventiesand right up through more recent investigations into the Teamsters Union, the Mafia, and the illegal drug trade of today.

So how do professional wrestling and the sheets' biz fit into this picture?

Well, in their 1986 book entitled "Raising Hell!", authors David Weir and Dan Noyes characterized the investigative journalist in this way: *"Underlying their work is the belief that things are rarely as they as they seem, and seldom as they should be."* And that's as good a starting point as any.

Prior to approximately 1983, "coverage" of pro wrestling was limited to the pabulum provided by Apter-esque newsstand mags (with the notable exception of Marcus Griffin's 1936 inside view of the business, "The Fall Guys"). Surely, even Mr. Apter himself would agree that these publications journalistically promoted the idea that "things are indeed as they seem".

Around 1983, as anyone even remotely related to the wrestling business knows all too well, things changed. **The sheets were born.** The reasons for their arrival on the scene at that particular time are numerous and up for great debate (among the possibilities: cable's impact upon the accessibility and exposure of wrestling, a new generation of information-hungry young people who were encouraged by the kind of investigative reporting outlined above to always "dig below the surface" in search of the "real" story, the decisions by Mr. & Mrs. Meltzer and Mr. & Mrs. Keller some 25 to 30 years ago to procreate, and on and on and on.) The important thing, however, is that a business that had never -- that's N-E-V-E-R -- been subjected to legitimate reporting before was now fair game.

But why was that the case? After all, that wasn't the case with other mainstream industries that, like pro wrestling in the mid-1980s, experienced explosive growth to never-before-seen levels. Two of my favorites examples -- the fast food industry and the airlines -- were extensively covered in magazines, trade journals, and specialized newsletters that provided every imaginable tidbit of "inside information", analysis, and scuttlebutt.

Even so-called "cottage industries" spawned during our lifetime were immediately met with thorough coverage (the computer industry, for instance, almost instantaneously gave birth to literally hundreds of related publications).

So why hadn't pro wrestling ever been covered before in the same "insider's" fashion that it is today? That, I'm afraid, is an easy one. It was (and for many, continues to be) "the nature" of a business that did not allow for this type of open coverage -- in fact, those within it would claim with unwavering conviction, "It would only be hurt by it."

It was a "closed" business, if ever there was one, built upon a facade that no legitimate journalist, no reporter, no mark could be allowed to expose without doing serious damage to the business itself (so they said). Consequently, not only was information not made readily available, but the accepted practice was to immediately and unforgivingly squash (generally by kayfabe) any attempts to obtain such information.

Simply put, "conventional" reporting just wasn't going to get the job done here, folks. *"Investigative reporting,"* said Wier and Noyes, *"is a journalistic tool designed to penetrate 'the smokescreen for the powerful' that results in the distribution of official views without critical analysis."* A little lofty perhaps, but the right idea, to be sure...

No doubt about it: For professional wrestling to be covered as it is today by the sheets, that "smokescreen" had to be penetrated. And that meant lots of "digging", plenty of off-the-record conversations, and a steady "journalistic infiltration" of a business that had resisted it -- right or wrong -- for oh-so-long.

And that, Messrs. Woodward and Bernstein would most assuredly agree, is what investigative reporting is all about.

In the next "Strictly Business": How the evolution of the sheets business may, in many ways, be mirroring the evolution of the wrestling industry itself.

PROMOTER PROFILE OF THE AVERAGE FAN
by Steve Meyerson

BORN: 7/4/84 Everywhere, USA

OCCUPATION: Elementary School Student

MOVIE: No Holds Barred

TV SHOW: Superstars of Wrestling

3 WORDS DESCRIBING THE AVERAGE FAN: Gullible, foolish, mark

THINGS THE AVERAGE FAN CAN DO WITHOUT: Wrestlers without gimmicks or entrance music. Wrestlers with athletic, non gargantuan physiques. Matches lasting longer than 10 minutes. Hogan winning without posing. TV without sweetening in post production. Honesty from wrestling promoters. Wrestling publications which emphasize words over pictures.

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Seeing Hogan pin Andre in the greatest match of all time.

DREAM VACATION: A free trip to Wrestlemania including a chance to pose with Hulk and Sid and an on camera interview with Sean Mooney and Lord Al Hayes.

PERSON TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Hulk Hogan or Ultimate Warrior

WHO WOULD PLAY THE AVERAGE FAN IN A MOVIE: Pee Wee Herman

READER PROFILES

NAME: Vic Stanley

OCCUPATION: Chemical Technologist, writer/publisher

BORN: 1/13/53 Koizumi, Japan

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: charismatic, brilliant, modest

DREAM VACATION: Incarcerated in a Turkish prison with Traci Lords

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: white trash, politicians, radical feminists, self-righteous religious fanatics, bratty kids, poorly trained pets

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Marilyn Rundle

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Casablanca, Geek Maggot Bingo

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: Limeade, tobasco sauce, batteries

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: a bad Elvis impersonator

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: David Letterman, Ob-Gyn Update

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: 1. The night I picked up Curt Hennig's used blade after he won a battle royal in Chicago. 2. Being personally insulted by Bobby Heenan.

NAME: HARRY WHITE

OCCUPATION: Insurance Sales, nightclub owner, "commisioner" of St. Louis wrestling

BORN: 6/9/49 St. Louis, MO

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: Al Bundy charisma (or Bundyesque charisma)

DREAM VACATION: In the rice fields of Manchuria discovering the next Gorilla Monsoon.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: extra large condoms

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Anyone that picks up a tab.

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: John Water's Desperate Living

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: baking soda, erotic ice cubes, penicillan mold

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Not in a movie but in a movie theatre-Pee Wee Herman could capture my movements

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Political Confirmation Hearings

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: 1. Jon Gallagher's Memphis convention where I was turned on to Chokehold and Arena Report 2. Getting verbally and physically abused by One Man Gang and Kevin Sullivan during a match while timekeeping.

NAME: Tim D'allaird

OCCUPATION: manager of a comic book store

BORN: 6/19/64 Troy, NY

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: cynical, sarcastic, psychotic I've also been described as the archtypical Dirty White Boy (which explains why I enjoy

DREAM VACATION: Riding my Harley along the coast of Australia (Memphis wrestling so much)

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: Vince McMahon, Jr, rap music, helmut laws

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Cactus Jack

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Better Off Dead (with John Cusack) or Roadhouse

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: Budweiser, frozen pizza

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Stephen Nichols (played the guy with the eye patch on "Days of Our Lives")

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Tie between "Home Improvement" and "Seinfeld"

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Traveling in a snowstorm to the Nassau Coliseum in L.I. to see my first live NWA house show the night before Starcade '87 and getting to high five the Nature Boy on his way out of the ring,

NOTES FROM THE PARKING LOT

by,
Marianne Ryan

Earlier tonight, as I put off for yet another hour doing this column, I watched HBO's special Play By Play: A History of Sports TV. During the first hour, they briefly mentioned pro wrestling saying that television created it. Tonight, I watched the second part, which ended with a segment on thrills and chills. It got me thinking about some of the moments that have stood out this past year in the world of wrestling.

I'll admit that I still get chills being in a packed arena when Hulk Hogan is introduced. I never thought anything would come close to that, until the first time I saw Ric Flair walking down the aisle at a WWF match. It was something that seemed so impossible to believe. Sure, Dusty Rhodes said he would never work for the WWF, and who could have imagined the Road Warriors as WWF champs, but Ric Flair was the NWA, and most people just assumed he was also the WCW. We were wrong. Some people think the excitement has vanished now that Hogan/Flair has made the round of house shows. But the mere fact that Ric Flair is part of the WWF still holds some excitement for me. And I doubt all those hardcores out there won't be the littlest bit giddy the day Flair becomes WWF champ.

Other moments that stand out from 1991...the wedding of Randy and Liz. Sure it had nothing to do with wrestling, and was very sappy, but it was great to be able to see these two finally acknowledge publicly their marriage. Bret Hart winning the intercontinental belt is another. Bret has had a lot on his mind outside of wrestling, and that helped to cause a major rift in our friendship, but nonetheless, he is such a superb talent, he deserves the recognition. He also gets my wishes that he gets his act together in 92. While I have never been a big fan of the LOD, the fact that they are the only team to hold the AWA, NWA and WWF tag team titles indicates their significance to the world of wrestling. Lex Luger finally winning the WCW title was another of those moments, but more because, at least in my opinion, it was a tainted victory. Luger's matches against Flair were incredible. In the absence of Flair, it made sense to pit Luger against the number two challenger, only that wasn't Barry Windham. A match between Luger and Sting not only would have given the WCW the match of the year, but would have given credibility to the victory.

In general, 1991 was a year of transition. The WCW turned away from Ric Flair and vested its future in Lex Luger. Over at the WWF, a lot of the focus was taken away from it's two top competitors. The Ultimate Warrior was fired and is still missing. And Hogan went off to lay another egg in Hollywood. To pick up the slack, we had Sid Justice (boy, I bet Vince just about died when he got hurt), and then came Flair. But both organizations are slowly handing over the reigns to the guys who will be at the top for the next five plus years. The WCW seemed to be making up tag teams like it was some kind of game, while the WWF got rid of most of their teams. The rest of the wrestling world saw Joe Pedicino making a go of the GWF. Smaller promotions started popping up again. Canada said if you want to show your stuff up here, you gotta film some of it up here, eh.

As for me, I wasn't quite as busy as last year. I went to 32 matches and covered over 7800 miles. I have now been to 140 matches, in 45 different cities, in 12 different states. I saw my first USWA match, and my first small-time independent matches. Ted DiBiase discovered that sometimes a limo isn't the only way to go when you could ride with Sherri and I and have the two of us keep you entertained by singing to you. I got to watch Wrestlefest from the dugout at Busch Stadium. I got horrendously lost in Louisville. I saw George Steele naked (it was awful). It was a good year and for that let me quickly thank Sherri, Ted, Terry, Pat Tanaka, Mike McGuirk, Marilyn, Ron and most of all, you folks who bother to read this page every month. Have a great Christmas and may you find everything you want under the tree. Until 1992...



While the sheets and radio personalities giddely try to be first to pat WCW on the back for one great show, ratings triumphs and the signings of 2, possibly 3 big Titan names- on my tv show, I broke the story that Richard Lewis on the Tonight Show(Jay Leno as host- no relation) mentioned he rode the same plane with "retired fat guy wrestler Dusty Rhodes and a few other wrestlers. I was appalled when he said 'what a stupid crowd we worked in front...' " Leno went on to say he asked Rhodes why he'd say that, and Rhodes retorted by yelling and screaming at Lewis. I enjoyed the Clash, and I applaud the new direction(that is WRESTLING- or at least closer to it) and talent being signed(er- not their attempts at Warrior). But Rhodes has got to go- Crockett may be the reason for the tv successes, and I'd welcome Jerry Jarrett in any capacity. Herd being relegated to less harmful positions is great- but it's time for Rhodes to go. Especially if Luger leaves, he might make himself or Dustin champ. I thought Rhodes brought in legend Harley Race to come out of retirement and destroy. Instead Race joins all the other pink-slipped wrestlers.

Had Johnny Valentine and Buddy Rogers on my show 12/4/91- uncensored Budro and the Boob. I got Buddy to admit he set up wrestling's greatest obscene practical joker-Valentine- for many of those "horrible skits we did." Both joined Sammartino, Graham and Funk in decrying steroid use in the media.

Heard WCW wants to copy Titan's stupid theme title, TUESDAY IN TEXAS with similar schtick-Next Week in Nebraska, December in Delaware and Christmas in Connecticut... Sorry but the general consensus is Survivor's only good match was Flair's, and TIT(er-Tuesday in Texas) stunk as well. I just don't like guys hitting women- and why did Savage pin Jake after only about 3 minutes with the extended followup? Flair is just not being marketed right, although he will deservedly get the WWF title before dropping everything to Hogan at Wmania- which I hope begins to draw and isn't just a 5 minute match with best-ofs from both guys. Did Hogan- Flair at MSG draw 15 or 22 grand?! If this can't draw, what can? And Teresa Demarie says that's why they're pushing Jake-Savage so hard to draw, cos' Flair-Hogan just isn't doing the business we hoped. California and Hawaii fans were irked that ole' Budney Rogers(billed in the old Pfeiffer days) Ripper Roy Collins didn't get more ink. At least WON reported he was the first heel color commentator next to Dick Lane. Collins was the first sissy heel, and a legend getting himself and Luke Graham booted out of many circuits. They certainly left a pink trail of color. Collins will best be remembered in his later heel and then face days for the great Hawaii circuit by wearing too-small lava lavas and leis. His trademark line there was "one size lava lava mo better I tink" always got them laughing. Here's to you, opu-drop master- your career spanned 3 decades. Gordon Scozzari's AWF's tv taping now occurs Dec 16th in Boston at Lowell and although no Williams or Spivey features TNT, Cheetah Kid Ted Petty in a Pillman role vs Nikita Koloff, and Paul Orndorf was requested by Cornette and Stan Lane. Robert Gibson joins Jerry Jarrett as the new Rock and Roll Express(Tim Horner in New Japan and will come to the AWF in Feb, when Big Daddy comes to work and live in the States. Credit Gordon and Adrian Street along with superb bookers Gilbert, Mantell and Beach for creating all the excitement. I urge all insiders to go- I'll be there for their shows Dec 14, 16 and January 24 near Goodhart's show in Philly. Will Owen Hart be there to face Shiro Koshinaka for Joel Goodhart- all indications are Vince'll let him as he did Ron Garvin finish up the AWA ppv... also Buddy Rogers wants CWN to know he IS in good shape, and he is training for his 25th defeat of Buddy Landell. He'll retire the belt and himself after the W. Okooguy, guygenes!

TALE OF A TITAN
by Anni Roberts

Most people acknowledge Vince McMahon's business accumen and flair for promotion. Many will concede that he is also an illustrious announcer, providing deft descriptions of wrestling matches with a voice as powerful as his will. But rarely mentioned is Vince's potent sex appeal. I will never forget how he electrified viewers with a flawless rendition of "Stand Back" during the Slammy Awards Show in February of 1988. His dance routine was superb; dishy muscles and tendons worked in tandem to create blue chip boffo. Style, charisma and physical allure form a combination of attributes that elevates mere desire to steamy fantasy.

Sure, it's easy for impoverished weaklings to attack McMahon, disguising their envy behind petty complaints. Big deal--he didn't soak a crying towel over some stupid boating mishap. So his heavyweight champ lacks the skills of Baryshnikov. Are you a Titan in your field of endeavor? Not likely, pal.

Ruling a vast empire is a welcome challenge for Vince. Imagine a morsel of a mortal engendering the utmost adoration and respect from his employees. I wonder if, during a particularly stressful day, Vince would allow a moment for a massage. My willing fingers would trace his sculptured contours firmly enough to ease his tensions, yet softly enough to pay homage to his vibrant perfection. Vince is the true champion, though modesty dictates that he designate another to "assume the position".

Were it not for the brilliant foresight and marketing genius of Mr. WWF, pro wrestling would still occupy a seamy segment of the sports universe. Thanks to McMahon, fans can emerge from the back alley of obscurity to literary prominence. Thanks to McMahon, famous talk show hosts vie for the honor of listing professional wrestlers among their guests. Thanks to McMahon, our economy is enhanced with each purchase of a pay-per-view. Rather than malign this magnificent mogul, we should strive to support his wrestling spectacles so that qualified people can continue to do a job for many years.

READER PROFILE

NAME: Anni Roberts

OCCUPATION: Private investor, heel wrestling reporter for "Plain Brown Wrapper"

BORN: 7-18- 43 Bayonne, NJ

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: cynical, independant, creative

DREAM VACATION: Not having to take one.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: crybabies, taxes, Van Hammer

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: One Man Gang (if he's unavailbale or institutionalized, Jack Kemp can substitute.

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Robocop

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: soda, soda, soda

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Sherri Martel

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Nightly Business Report on PBS.

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Paul E. Dangerously "telephoning" Jason Hervey

READER PROFILES

NAME: STEVE DICKINSON

OCCUPATION: unemployed (between careers)

BORN: 7/16/63 Beverly, MA

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: Humorous, sensitive, friendly (souns like Alan Alda)

DREAM VACATION: Hawaii

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: "People who make quote signs when they talk" & infidelity.

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: David Letterman & Cher

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Big Chill, Field of Dreams, Rocky

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: pizza, chinese food, Arm & Hammer baking soda

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Probably that Ernest dude.

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: David Letterman

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Probably when I learned Ric Flair went to WWF. Only because his recognition world wide is way overdue.

NAME: JIM RUSSELL

OCCUPATION: Industrial account executive, Morton Salt Company

BORN: 1/19/ 45 Raleigh, NC

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: opinionated, confident, extroverted, need to add single.

DREAM VACATION: 7 days and 7 nights at Labelle Creole, St. Martin. I took it last year and my employer picked up the tab.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: Jim Herd, wrestlers who can't work, tourists

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Thomas Jefferson

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Meatballs. I spent two summers as a camp counsellor at Camp Mah-Kee-Nac in Lenox, MA

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: beer, green stuff, and "What the hell is this?" I don't know what the last one is but my girlfriend

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Jim Varney use to say it when she opened the fridge.

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Jeopardy

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Fred Ward giving my mother two comps to a wrestling card and then taking me. I became a fan and remain one today. When my mother complains about my watching wrestling, I remind her that she took me to my first card in 1951.

NAME: MICHAEL BASNIGHT

OCCUPATION: owner of a building supply company

BORN: 4/25/53 Ahoskie, NC

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: fair, disconcerting, hyperactive

DREAM VACATION: Being in Las Vegas and hitting numbers at the craps table.

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: past due accounts, women office politics

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH:

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Journey To The Center Of The Eartg, Midway

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: cheese, beer, OJ

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Paul Newman

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: ESPN Boxing, ESPN Speedweek

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: I was 14 years old and the first time Skull Murphy and Brute Bernard came to Norfolk, VA. They wrestles the Bolo Brothers and it was a dq bout as all four wrestlers had cheers in the ring for all three falls. Murphy and Bernard wanted to leave an impression and they did.

A PIECE OF MY MIND
by Evan Ginzburg

Ric Flair is not going to save the WWF, for they are beyond saving. It's as simple as that....

A while back I was all pumped up to see the Flair-Piper encounter at MSG. It would have been the first live WWF show I'd attended since 1989, and the first MSG card since 1987. As I read the reviews in the sheets, however, I began to have my doubts. Both the Flair-Piper and early Flair-Hogan bouts were 3-3½* affairs with undercards that were even more nightmarish than usual. Still it was a classic match up on paper as these were two of my top five all-time favorites.

As I continued reading, I noticed that all the matches were relatively short and had pretty much the same ending and result. My desire to buy a ticket diminished and I resigned myself to watching it for free at a buddy's house on MSG cable two nights later. It was a good move.....

I believe I can honestly say that the first hour of the show was the WORST hour of MSG arena matches I'd ever seen. Bar none. That's twenty years of watching wrestling, folks. The opener was a dishevelled looking Texas Tornado vs. Big Bully Busick. I ran for the fast forward button, but forgot it wasn't on tape. This was the entertainment equivalent of watching two rhinos in heat. I felt bad for Kerry because of his tragic problems, and now he was relegated to an opener, but with this performance it was clear that this was where he belonged. Von Erich won the negative two star stinker and I fought to stay awake. This was followed by one of the most disappointing matches of all time. The British Bulldog and I.R.S. went to a twenty minute draw that felt like an hour. About 17 minutes were motionless and after a hot :45 spot towards the end of the match, they collapsed in exhaustion. Horrendous, and made even more infuriating by Bobby Heenan screaming what a "tremendous" match it was. Yeah, if you're a MORON it was a true classic. If steroids "enhance performance and strength", Daveys taking the wrong stuff because this dude is a shell of what he use to be. The third stinker of the century was Jim Neidhart (the most over-rated stiff of all time) vs. The Mountie (another guy who has no redeeming social value). Negative 7 stars for this baby, and one solid hour of my life flushed down the toilet.....

And then the main event. There was excitement in the air. Seeing Flair in an MSG headliner was a thrill for me and obviously to others in the audience. The match was hot. The action was non-stop. There was brawling. There were even a few wrestling holds. However, the ending was as predictable as I'd read, and the match was just as short (12 minutes). It was a solid 3 ½* encounter that I enjoyed, was glad to see, but in no way, shape, or form did it save this card. What was even scarier was that at this point the torture wasn't over...

After intermission, I was treated to another negative star match between Big Boss Man and Col. Mustafa (who bears an uncanny resemblance to the Iron Sheik). By this time, it was an hour and a half into the show and I had enjoyed all of 12 minutes of what I'd watched. In the giving credit where it's due department, though, Bret Hart vs. The Berzerker was a decent 2½* brawl that was entertaining and featured a minimal amount of rest holds.

After this, however, the horror set in. The next match would be The Matador vs. Hercules and The Natural Disasters (a more sadly appropriate name was never bestowed on a more pathetic team) vs. The Road Warriors (who haven't really had a memorable match since coming to the WWF). After a draining work day, I just couldn't imagine sitting through a match with Hawk and Animal vs. BUFOON & MILKSHAKE, because I naturally assumed the bout would be a disaster (yeah-I know, you're all out there groaning at these terrible puns, but I couldn't resist). Anyway, to make a long story short, I headed home. I couldn't take another pitiful slow motion moment. Thus, the totla tally: 2 hours of wrestling- less than half hour of entertainment.

Flair's here and it's just not enough!

Anyway, if you want to read about those long ago days when wrestling was truly great, pick up Wrestling-Then & Now, packed with exclusive interviews, pix, line-up sheets, nostalgia clips, photos, and origianl art. If you haven't seen it in a while, you'll enjoy the new format: only \$15.00/yr or \$1.25 for a sample to Evan Ginzburg--P.O. Box 471, Oakland Gardens Station, Flushing, NY 11364.

In parting, I always enjoy this forum in "AR". However, if I keep watching the WWF, I won't have any "Mind" left to share with you. Numbingly bad stuff!!!
See ya!

RAMBLINGS

The big news as I get ready to wrap this annual up centers around the heat of the finish between Hulk Hogan and Tenyru at the WWF/SWS/PWF combined show at the Tokyo Dome on 12/12. Kabuki (who is one of the front office guys for SWS) went into the press room to reveal the finish of the main event. Newspapers cover wrestling in Japan on a daily basis and most of the papers deadlines would have passed before the Hogan-Tenyru match. Well Kabuki gave them the finish which had Tenyru going over. So that was the story the Jap press sent to their papers. But that was not to be. Hogan pinned Tenyru after two lariets to win the bout. Apparently, Hulk on High wouldn't do the job. Halfway across the world and the guy won't suck in his ego. I don't know why SWS feels they need Vince's guys. Most of the wrestlers he sends over there are the washed up ones anyway. Yet, they put up with Hogan's bullshit. Other results on the card saw the Legion of Doom beat Natural Disasters (there was some talk of Disasters winning belts here since John Tenta (Earthquake) is over here but that would have been DISastrous), Naoki Sano over Rick Martel winning the Jr. Heavy title, Masakatsu Funaki beat Jerry Flynn, Minoru Suzuki beat Wellington Wilkins, The Takanos over The Rockers (who did their split up but went back to the same dressing rooms anyway), Davey Boy Smith & Ashura Hara defeated Haku & Yatsu, Ted DiBiase pinned Kerry Von Erich. There were a couple I missed as well. Told that attendance was 45,000 but not sure how much was papered.....In another Japan note, Akio Sato who also worked for SWS front office visited 5 ALL-Japan wrestlers and talked to them about jumping to WWF/SWS. The five were Terry Gordy, Steve Williams, Doug Furnas, Dan Kroffat, and Stan Hansen. The only two that were interested were Dr. Death and Furnas but since no announcement was made at the Dome, it may not happen.....The new AWF started up shop with its first show in Asbury Park on 12/14 in front of 200. Main event saw Paul Orndorff beat Al Perez via DQ. Perez was a sub for Nikita Koloff who was there but had some appendix problems. Norman beat Kamala on a DQ, Billy Jack defeated Botswana Beast, Mike Sharpe beat Dutch Mantell in a bout that was supposed to be a draw but Dutch blew out his knee and they went to a finish. Puerto Rico's TNT & Hercules Ayala over Manny Fernandez & Gorilla Gombi (?). In a six man tag, it was Junkyard Dog, Sunny Beach, & Jeff Gaylord over Barry Horowitz, Bob Orton, & Dirty White Boy Tom Burton. Others appearing were Adrian Street, Pez Whatley, and Chris Candito. No shows were Eddie Gilbert, Tom Prichard, Jeff Jarrett, and Robert Gibson. Sheik & Sabu showed up late but weren't allowed to work since there is a commision in New Jersey and they had already put away the Ekg machines and such. Supposedly, the president of the group, Gordon Scozzari paid the boys up front for the Monday tapings in Lowell which may not have been too smart because Haynes & Perez didn't show Monday..... The AWF TV tapings took place 12/16 in Lowell, MA in front of about 250 fans. Most of the same guys on the Asbury card worked. Stan Lane & Jim Cornette were there as well. Paul Orndorff beat Lane to win the AWF's first championship. Ronnie Gossett was there as the manager of Horowitz and Orton who were called Dukes of Hazzard. The only juice of the night was from Hercules Ayala. When I mentioned that the AWF wanted to get on the Family Channel with The Sheik as one of the wrestlers, one source said they could make a new program, "Heavy Juice w/ Pat Robertson". Kamala was signing autographs and said to this one fan, "I'm not supposed to know how to write." Junkyard Dog was furious because he didn't have a plane ticket home. Hope Gordon didn't get thumped. They didn't do any announcing which means they'll probably post produce it if it even makes the air. Chris Cruise and Cornette were set to be the announcers. Talk is there was some huge money blown on these two shows and there is a lot of skepticism on the January Penta date coming off..... Let's move onto other news.....WCW's February PPV has been moved from Taj Mahal

in Atlantic City to The Mecca in Milwaukee. Seems Vince had some influence on the Trumpster to not let WCW have the date. They'll die in Milwaukee. They don't draw well in the Midwest at all.....Vince also pulled some stunts to get WCW's TV off the air in England three weeks before Herd and company went on their tour. The first three nights of the tour drew 2,000, 4,000, and 5,700 respectively all in London. Main event the first night was Luger vs. P.N. News. May have had something to do with it. Heard Terry Taylor jobbed to everyone including the english wrestlers.....The Sheik is now booking FMW in Japan. There is a good match. Kevin Sullivan joins the tour on 1/3..... Billy Jack Haynes has moved to New York. Word is he'll be back in Titan which is why some are saying he no showed the AWF taping.....Look for Sting to win the title from Luger at the Feb. PPV. WCW are tired of Lex's attitude.... Joel Goodheart had a show cancelled last weekend. Also heard his radio show didn't air as well. Will try to find out what the deal is.....Speaking of radio shows, John Arezzi's may be off the air by the end of this year..... Piledriver Promotions line up for Memorial Hall in Kansas City shapes up like this: Main Event is a 25 man steel cage battle royal with barbed wire. Sounds like a Goodheart main event. Did Joel change his name? Kamala meets Honkey Tonk Man, Butch Reed vs. Bob Orton with the winner meeting Jerry Lawler at the next show, John Tatum & Rod Price vs. D.J. Peterson & Stev Ray, Dick Murdoch vs. Bulldog Bob Brown, and others.....Barbarian and Warlord back together as Powers of Pain. (Hey, didn't Marianne say that in her last column?) They have house show dates with the New Foundation in January.....ABC-TV's 20/20 interviewed Dave Meltzer for a piece on steroids to run during the sweeps in February.....Looking forward to seeing the Billy Graham interview on "Inside Edition". That's if Vince don't block it from seeing the airwaves..... I'll tell you what, Hogan made a big mistake doing the talk show circuit and denying regular use of roids. If this mess hits the fan again, he's going to look real bad. Could the Titan empire crumble? We can only hope....IWF drew 225 in Rodeo Orlando on 12/16 with Mondo Kleen retaining the IWF title beating Dick Slater via DQ. Long Riders beat Heartbreakers via DQ in a 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ star bout. Great heat for Riders since it was a country Western bar. Unlike usual bar shows, this set up was real good. Kip Winchester & Tim Parker juiced..... Did you notice how I've been avoiding talking about the bill to regulate wrestling in Florida that will be discussed in January. I'm hoping it'll go away.. Certain aspects are ridiculous.....Jerry Gray plugged another NWA card this time in Wildwood with Gray vs. Murdoch on top, and Ninja vs. Wrestling II for the Georgia title. What, did they ban this bout from Georgia?..... 12/29 in Hudson, Fl has Al Perez & Johnny Ace vs. Terminators. It'll be brother vs. brother.....Lou Perez working some Florida indy dates before his start with WCW January 2nd.....Talk is that after the Topeka Clash, WCW looking to the Bahamas for the next one. They better not look too far. Security are marks as instead of helping heels back to the dressing room, they attack them. Bahamas is a weird place..... ICWA in 12/19 has Jumbo Berretta vs. Dick Slater.....Blackjack Mulligan slated on the IWF card 1/10 in Winter Haven. No comment.....Sid Justice booked on the Ft. Myers TV taping on 1/8 in a tag with Savage vs. Undertaker & Roberts. He's also booked at house shows including 1/18 in Toledo vs. Undertaker.....Subscriber Jim Russell corrected me on Ron Bass's career. He works for a place in Tampa called House of Threads which is a nuts and bolts place. Good future in nuts and bolts. I like that he sold plants better.....And yes Jim, I do know those places quite well, was just playing innocent.....SAPW conducting a tourney on 1/11 in Roseboro, NC for the title that was stripped off of Manny Fernandez. Tommy Angel & Tommy Seabolt hold the tag belts,I'm all rambled out. Enjoy the rest of the annual.

READER PROFILES

NAME: MIKE GUNTER

OCCUPATION: Sales Rep- furniture manufacturer

BORN: 4/23/55 Mobile, AL

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: cool, calm, collected

DREAM VACATION: a week in Las Vegas with two beautiful strippers

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: Stupid people.

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Ashlyn Gere

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Used Cars

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: OJ, milk, beer

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: George Wendt or John Goodman

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Coach

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Being there live for Ric Flair winning belt from Harley Race at first Starrcade.

NAME: BRUCE GRUMMERT

OCCUPATION: Nursing technician inintensive care & coronary care unit.

BORN: 4/13/51 Omaha, NE

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: easy going, very understanding, and usually quiet at first with a group.

DREAM VACATION: Japan

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: crime

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Ric Flair, Garth Brooks, Lori Morgan

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: Ghost

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: Pepsi, Dr. Pepper, pizza

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Probably no one (Ha!)

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: WCW and Rescue 911

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Meeting Ric Flair, Terry Funk at WCW office and having my picture taken with them in Atlanta. Also eating with Lou Thesz and Buddy Rogers in April of 1990 in Greensboro.

NAME: WILLIAM BURNETT

OCCUPATION: Customer Service Director - Maybelline Cosmetics

BORN: 4/23/47 Rochester, NY

WHAT 3 WORDS DESCRIBE YOU BEST: introspective, moody, single

DREAM VACATION: Club Med - Tahiti

THINGS YOU CAN DO WITHOUT: cold weather, snow

WHOM IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH: Jimmy Buffett

MOVIE YOU COULD SEE ANYTIME: "Night Shift"

3 THINGS THAT CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR: cream cheese, green onions, hot sauce

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A MOVIE: Woody Allen

WHAT TV SHOW DO YOU NEVER MISS: Cheers

FAVORITE WRESTLING MOMENT: Rochester War Memorial...1960 (I was 12 years old) Dick Beyer (pre-Destroyer) vs. Fritz Von Erich...First live match. Tons of heat. A firecracker came out of the crowd and almost hit Fritz in the head.

 CORRESPONDENT'S CORNER

Baltimore Arena (WCW)

Baltimore, MD

November 27, 1991

Correspondent: Bruce Ginevan'

1) Arachniman pinned Tommy Rich with a flying bodypress. C 2) Tom Zenk & Big Josh beat Terrence Taylor & Richard Morton when Morton left Taylor alone and Terry got pinned. D 3) Madusa beat Bambi with a flying spinning kick that Bruce said he felt in his seat. C 4) Dallas Page & Diamond Stud beat The Patriots when Stud pinned Todd Champion. C 5) Big Van Vader splashed P.N. News. Match was slow paced and stiff with Vader not selling for News. D 6) Cactus Jack pinned Van Hammer. Match was all Jack taking bump after bump. C 7) Scott Steiner frankensteinered Mr. Hughes in a short bout. D 8) Sting and Rick Rude went to a double DQ. Fifteen minutes into the bout, Madusa did a run in and tried a flying bodypress but Sting caught her. Rude, Paul E. and Madusa tripled on Sting until Steamboat & Rhodes made the save. Heat was tremendous. B 9) Rick Steamboat & Dustin Rhodes downed the Enforcers when Steamer pinned Larry Z. B 10) Lex Luger pinned Rick Steiner with his feet on the ropes. C ATT; 1,100

Madison Square Garden (WWF) New York, NY 11/30/91

Correspondent: Elyse Zois

1) El Tito Matador Santana used the flying forearm to beat Kato. 2) Texas Tornado beat The Berzerker via count out when they were both brawling outside and Kerry beat the count in. 3) Virgil sunset flipped Skinner. 4) Hulk Hogan beat Ric Flair via DQ. Hennig gave Flair brass knucks and Ric ko'd Hulk and pinned him but another ref came out and told the original ref what happened and they reversed it. 5) Hacksaw Duggan pinned The Barbarian. 6) Bret Hart beat The Mountie. BBM came out and took the Mountie's shock stick. 7) I.R.S. beat Big Boss Man with the use of the briefcase. BBM can't handle guys with gimmicks. First he was losing to Mountie due to the shock stick and now this. 8) Nasty Boys over Rockers when Michaels accidentally reversed a small package Marty had on Knobbs.



THIS DOESN'T HURT HALF AS BAD AS WATCHING
 OZ VERSES VAN HAMMER!

Sunrise Musical Theatre (WCW)

Ft. Lauderdale, FL

December 2, 1991

Correspondent: Robert Mitchell

1) Z-Man over J.T. Smith with a dropkick from the middle rope. 2) Brian Pillman beat Mike Graham with a backdrop into a bridge in a sci-fi match. 3) The Patriots beat The Young Pistols with the Pistols looking pretty annoyed. I thought they were de-emphasizing these Patsies. 4) Van Hammer over Badstreet. Street was Brad Armstrong as a heel. I wish they'd make up their minds on which character he's going to be. Or maybe they'll have him bring both costumes so if they need a face or heel, he can fill the bill. 5) Madusa beat Bambi with a dropkick from the middle rope. Must have been the move of the night to use. 6) Van Vader & Diamond Stud over The Freebirds when Stud pinned Garvin. 7) Sting beat Cactus Jack in a bout that wasn't too hot since the building isn't conducive to bumps. ATT: 180 After the bout, Robert went to the back with Dave Flaherty & Jeff Bowdren and the Pistols said, "Hey, here come the hecklers." They were very cordial.

American Legion Post 139 (CWF) Tampa, FL
Correspondent: Shannon Rose

December 7, 1991

- 1) Jim "The Animal" Cooper over Mike Steele via count out. 2) Sonny T pinned Frankie Reyes. 3) Big V Verne Henderson over Mike Steel. 4) Rob Van Damme' beat Jumbo Berretta via DQ. 5) Black Panther over Jerry Flynn via forfeit when Flynn no-showed. 6) Kevin Sullivan went to a no contest with Tommy Star.

Omaha Civic Auditorium (WWF) Omaha, NE
Correspondent: Bruce Grummert

December 7, 1991

- 1) Warlord over Greg Valentine. 2) Chris Chavis defeated Hercules. Chavis was a sub for Snuka. 3) Beverly Brothers downed the Bushwhackers with the expected stalling and comedy routine. 4) Hawk pinned Typhoon after hitting him with Jimmy Hart's megaphone. 5) Vigil beat Skinner. 6) Big Boss MAN school-boyed IRS. 7) Ric Flair used the ropes to pin Roddy Piper. ATT: 3,524

Tampa Sportatorium (ICWA) Tampa, FL
Correspondent: Paul Spiegel

December 12, 1991

- 1) Jumbo Berretta beat Rob Van Damme. 2) Cocant Man was awarded his bout over Mark Starr when the time limti expired and they got 5 more minutes but that expired as well and ref gave bout to Coco. 3) Jimmy Backlund beat Pat Tanaka on a forfeit as Pat no-showed. 4) Kenny Kendall and Tommy Star wentto a no contest as Kevin Sullivan interfered. Both Star and Kendall are faces. 5) Terminators downed the Star Riders. 6) Lou Perez beat Kevin Sullivan via DQ.

Boston Garden (WWF) Boston, MA
Correspondent: Ted Field

December 14, 1991

- 1) El Matador over Hercules with the flying burrito. 2) Bret Hart turned back The Mountie in 3 seconds. Ted said the fans didn't even realize they had been screwed out of what would have been the best match of the night. 3) Bushwhackers & Jim Neidhart beat Beverly Brothers & The Genius. 4) IRS and Big Boss Man went to a double DQ and then the worst pull apart occurred. 5) Virgil put Skinner to sleep along with probably the crowd. 6) Sgt. Slaughter beat Gen Adnon & Iron Sheik in what Ted described as the Geritol handicap match of the week. 7) Hacksaw Duggan & Randy Savage beat Undertaker & Jake Roberts when Randy rolled up Jake. ATT: 3,000 Ted said the crowd looked like a WCW crowd. He was waiting for Dustin to sprint down the aisle any minute.

LETTERS TO "AR"

Survivors

Just watched the Survivor Series last night. What the hell is the world coming to when Dusty books more pins-clean or otherwise-than anyone in the country? I know everyone thought LOD and Flair leaving would be the death knell (no Undertaker pun intended) for WCW but they've proven to be very disappointing. Maybe it's Vince's fault...maybe not. Ric is as repetitive as ever in the ring, however, he and Hennig were the highlight of a dreary show with their interviews. Crowd heat died quicker than a WCW show. Seemed to me it lost a lot of life after that ridiculous first match. Anyway, after watching the show, my friends refused to chip in for the PPV 'cause it sucked. I had to whip out my "King Cobra", shake it at 'em, and they submitted the necessary funds. High point of the evening truly was looking at my collection of Torch pictures and my buddy and Flair worshipper Steve noticed a shot from Wade with Pillman headlocking Flair...Steve said, "Notice anything about this?" I looked and found nothing. He then pointed out Ric's left testicle

hanging about halfway through his trunks. I gotta get new friends.

Chris Martin
Springfield, IL

This & That

I was encouraged to see that Marianne Ryan shared my suffering regarding the recent performances of the Chicago Bears. As a longtime Chicago area native I have lived and died with them all my life. I only wonder how many Bears will someday enter pro wrestling. Can William Perry become the P.N. News of tomorrow? He'd have to drop some weight first. Can Mike Ditka become the ultimate heel manager? He and Fred Blassie could discuss metal body parts. Can Bear owner Mike McCaskey and Vince McMahon, Jr. join to write a treatise on how to inherit a big company, then alter it beyond recognition? Papa Bear Hallas and Vince McMahon Sr. are rolling-you know where.

Picture this movie: THE ADDAMS FAMILY - THE NEXT GENERATION starring King Kong Bundy as Pugsly III, Sid Justice as Lurch III, Winona Ryder as Wednesday III, Cactus Jack as Cousing Itt III, and Bruno Kirby. Could this be the brat pack of the future? I think about this stuff all the time.

Hey Ron, when are you going to set up that challenge match between Penelope Paradise and those geeky sheet guys I saw on that Florida TV show? You know which one I'm talking about. I bet Meltzer might even be able to work a decent match with her.

I was completely befuddled by George Maranville's letter in the 12/2 issue (nor did I understand my own.) I didn't have a clue to what he was talking about. I certainly hope he wasn't referring to people like Mark "You probably don't like me" Madman because he's got his own sheet now. It's called the Torch.

Happy Holidays to one and all!

Wic Stanley
Lafayette, IN

Cheers!

Only a provincial peon could deny the health promoting effects generated by the WWF's heels and babies. Chanting "USA!" at the sight of a two by four exercises the throat muscles and delivers a freshet of blood to pallid faces. Jumping to one's feet and turning the thumbs down to an arrogant Nature Boy supplies vital aerobic encouragement to lumpish bodies overfed on sitcoms and pseudo-news. Bouncing with Cousin Butch strengthens shoulder sinews long accustomed to shrugging off the peccadillos of Congressmen. Believing that pro wrestling is but a microcosm of reality promotes longevity for the faithful. Better a "mark" than untimely fodder for the Funeral Parlor, so raise your voices on high, skeptics. Let's hear it for "Ho-gan! Ho-gon!" Oh, what a flush!

Anni Roberts
Easton, MD

Harry Speaks

While every wrestling annual I have had the pleasure of reading has been excellent and the work reflects the "Herculean" (trademark Titan Sports) editing efforts of its creators, I especially look forward to the Arena Report Annual. Eclectic may be the best way to describe the issues of Arena Report or maybe even going to the extreme and calling it "The Total Package". (trademark Turner Home Entertainment)

As good fans we recognize that there is much more to the whole concept of pro wrestling than just in the ring wrestling and there is much more to

DEAR
ABBY



Arena Report than just reports from arenas. A virtual cornucopia of ideas, feelings, points counterpoints, I told you so's, guest appearances from other editors, and not only ideas from subscribers but from subscribers dark sheep psychotic family members. (i.e. Mullins)

I have never found much credibility in that pen is mightier than the sword phrase but in Arena Report, the features and letters are often more entertaining than the wrestling. Although the editor alleges not to encourage it, a few hot entertaining feuds occasionally spring up between readers. Good feuds for this year have been:

- The lumberjack match between O'Connor and Lano where fans of both run in to back their writer and stomp on the other guy.
- The mixed match between Ryan and Levine which sounded like the old Dan Ackroyd-Jane Curtin skits on Saturday Night Live where Dan would start off every week with the undeserving "Jane you ignorant slut.". Besides inspiring feedback pro and con, Arena Report writers Mike and Marianne and others take us where we have never been before.

For the future, Florida based Arena Report will be on the forefront of something exciting in wrestling with the state of Florida rivaling Japan for the most promotions doing shows. WCW, WWF, IWF, Suncoast, the old Florida office, the arrival of Joel Goodheart, others (fill them in Ron) Sounds like fun for you and us readers. On the other hand, a 1990's pessimist might look at that in a different light. More wrestlers bleeding combined with Florida mosquito infestations combined with a constant influx of illegal overseas aliens and the state better have a good supply of AZT.

Harry White
St. Louis, MO

Canuck Power Hour

For interests sake, my buddy Zinger has got a couple mentions on the Canadian version of the WCW Power Hour (on the studio segments with Paul E., Missy Hyatt, and Jim Ross) recently. On one, Paul E. was bugging Ross to "name one great Canadian fan". Missy interrupted with "Oh, I know that Zinger character from up in Woodstock!". And on another show (Oct. 16 to be exact), it went like this:

ROSS: Welcome back to the Power Hour everyone. We're gonna be going in just a few moments to this weeks' matclassic- a new feature that we'll be bringing you each and every week here on the Power Hour and-

MISSY: Is it gonna have me on it? When I was a manager? You know, I was one of the best managers there was- I won woman of the year, I've won like, Hot Love Babe from like, Jeff Zinger's GAG, I've won like, uh let's...

ROSS: Hot Love Babe?? Well....

MISSY: Yeah, I won that last year.

PAUL E.: From Jeff Zingers' GAG?

MISSY: Yeah!

PAUL E.: GAG?

MISSY: It's a magazine in Canada!

PAUL E.: GAG??

MISSY: Yeah!

PAUL E.: She makes me GAG!

ROSS: Uh, fans- let's go now to the ring and see the mat classic

Missy (purposely-to fit the segment, as she told Zinger later) changed the facts a bit (she didn't win Hot Love Babe from GAG, rather she was the woman Zinger made up the term Hot Love Babe From Hell for, back in GAG #1, circa 1988), but funny stuff nonetheless.

J.Z. Travis
Woodstock, ONT

Bruiser Brody vs Terry Funk
1980 San Francisco

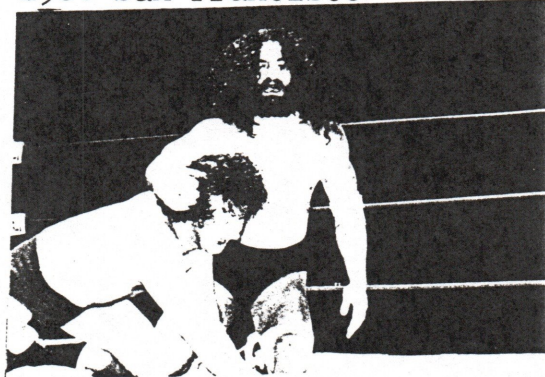


photo by Mike Lano

PARTING SHOT

I received many calls asking me if I had anything to do with Mike Lano getting a Torch Turkey Award. The truth of the matter is, I haven't talked to Wade Keller in about 5 months. I did try to contact him twice about contributing something for the annual but I never received a return call. Either he's too good to write for this sheet or he's miffed at me for not confronting him head on about his trip to Titan which I could understand. That was a mistake I'll admit. So the answer is no, I didn't have anything to do with Lano getting that "honor". But speaking of the Torch Turkey Awards, I noticed that Steve Beverly got one as well. Now I'm not here to argue whether Steve deserved one from Wade or not. It's Wade's sheet and he'll have to deal with the negative feedback (and I'm sure they'll be a lot although we probably won't read about it in the Torch). What I want to bring up is the treatment Steve got from Wade before the double issue came out. It seems Wade invited Steve to be on his radio show the week the issue was going out. After Steve's sign off from the show, Wade said, "Gobble, Gobble.", a reference to the award Wade had given him. Also in a couple of conversations Wade and Steve had over the phone during that week, Wade threw a few gobble, gobbles in which had Steve curious as to what he was talking about since he hadn't gotten the issue yet. So what's the big deal you say? It's a big deal because it was a very unprofessional thing to do. Here you have Steve (who to me is so out of place in this business because he is one of the nicest guys in the world, and this business doesn't have many of them to be sure) agree to do Wade's radio show and add credibility to it. And Wade finishes his stint with a little knock.

Steve Beverly didn't ask me to defend him. I took this up because Steve probably won't even mention it and I wanted Wade to know how a lot of people are going to feel. This is personal. It has nothing to do with the newsletter industry. I'll be the first to tell you that Wade's sheet will solidify itself as the #2 sheet in the market once Steve folds in January. Wade does a tremendous job on his newsletter but he needs to learn how to be a bit more professional about his work. Heck, maybe I'm all wrong. When I was his age maybe I was the same way.

My final message to Wade is this. You've burned a lot of bridges in this industry by the way you've gone about your business. Don't burn many more because the only one you'll have left is the bridge at Chapaquidick, and we all know the history of that bridge isn't so hot.

One last thing, if you want space to air your opinions on this, there will be space reserved in the 1/13 issue of "AR". Oh yeah, how about a plug in the next issue of Torch?

FINAL WORDS

I hope everyone enjoyed the annual. It was tough putting the pieces together but it was fun as well. Any comments you have on anything in this annual whether they be positive or negative are welcome and will be printed in the first issue of 1992. Until then, have a tremendous holiday season and I want to thank all of you for making 1991 a great year for "AR". Thanks everybody!!! See ya,

Ron